THE PROGRAM OF JESUS

EDWIN DU BOSE MOUZON

Central BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

presented by

REV. ELMER KIRKPATRICK

KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

Rev. Elmer Kirkpatrick

THE COLE LECTURES FOR 1925

Delivered Before VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

THE PROGRAM OF JESUS

BY

EDWIN DUBOSE MOUZON

THE COLE LECTURES

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BY

EDWIN DUBOSE MOUZON

ONE OF THE BISHOPS OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

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TO ALL WHO FOLLOW JESUS:

All my life I have been trying to see Jesus and show him to others. If I have seen more than some of my readers, I venture to express the fervent hope that they may come to see what has satisfied me and then filled me with unrest till his Kingdom shall come. If there be others who are sure that they have seen more in Jesus than I have seen, then I rejoice with them. Since he has come to mean more and more to me with the passing of the years, I, too, expect to see in him yet more and more of what is True and Beautiful and Good.

27739

THE COLE LECTURES

The late Colonel E. W. Cole of Nashville, Tennessee, donated to Vanderbilt University the sum of five thousand dollars, afterwards increased by Mrs. E. W. Cole to ten thousand, the design and conditions of which gift are stated as follows:

"The object of this fund is to establish a foundation for a perpetual Lectureship in connection with the School of Religion of the University, to be restricted in its scope to a defence and advocacy of the Christian religion. The lectures shall be delivered at such intervals, from time to time, as shall be deemed best by the Board of Trust; and the particular theme and lecturer will be determined by the Theological Faculty. Said lecture shall always be reduced to writing in full, and the manuscript of the same shall be the property of the University, to be published or disposed of by the Board of Trust at its discretion, the net proceeds arising therefrom to be added to the foundation fund, or otherwise used for the benefit of the School of Religion."

PREFACE

It so happened that in the spring of the present year it was my great privilege to deliver the *Cole Lectures* at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, and also the *Fondren Lectures,* at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Texas. In the *Fondren Lectures* I dealt with the personal aspects of the gospel of Jesus Christ; in the *Cole Lectures* I have discussed the social aspects of the gospel. The *Fondren Lectures* are published under the title, *The Missionary Evangel,* and I may be permitted to suggest to any who have the patience to read the *Cole Lectures* for 1925, that they should read also the *Fondren Lectures* for the present year. The social gospel is not the whole of the evangel; neither is the personal gospel all there is in the Christian message. It requires both the one and the other if New Testament Christianity is to be presented in its entirety. A note similar to this serves as the preface to the *Fondren Lectures* for 1925.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation of

the opportunity given me by the Faculty of Vanderbilt University of bringing a message out of my heart to the age in which I live. So many noble volumes have gone forth from the *Cole Lectureship* that I have immediate assurance that the publication of my discussion of *The Program of Jesus* on this foundation will insure a wider reading than I could easily have had in some other way.

EDWIN DUBOSE MOUZON.

Nashville, Tennessee.

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Lecture I

PLAUSIBLE PROGRAMS REJECTED

"Then said Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan."
—*Matthew* 3: 10.

Lecture I

PLAUSIBLE PROGRAMS REJECTED

The author of a widely read volume has recently said: "The beginnings of Christianity constitute a fairly definite historical phenomenon. The Christian movement originated a few days after the death of Jesus of Nazareth. It is doubtful whether anything that preceded the death of Jesus can be called Christianity." [1]

The position taken in the present series of lectures is far removed from the obscurantism of the writer just quoted. The beginnings of Christianity do constitute a fairly definite historical phenomenon. The Christian movement began with the coming of Jesus and the epoch-making announcement, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." To leave out of sight the Life Jesus lived, the Message he brought to men, and the Work he actually did in the days of his flesh, is to make it impossible to understand the meaning and purpose of the

[1] "Christianity and Liberalism," pp. 20, 21.

Christian movement. For Christianity is not primarily a system of dogmatic theology; it is rather what the author of the Acts of the Apostles likes to call it, a "Way" of life. And it is as "The Way"—*the Christian Way of Living*—that I purpose presenting the Program of Jesus.

In thinking about Jesus' program for human society, we are interested both in what Jesus did and in why he did it. That is to say, Jesus lived a certain way, he freely accepted the will of the Father and dedicated himself to the service of mankind. But he did this with something in view—and that something was the salvation of the world. But what is meant by "the salvation of the world"? The very thing we purpose talking about has been obscured by our theological terminology. By "the world" has been meant the world of individuals as individuals; and by "salvation" has been meant deliverance from the pains of eternal death and entrance upon the bliss of the redeemed in heaven—this and little more. Almost all the thinking of Christian theologians has been centred upon "the Work of Christ" as it had to do with its relation to an

offended Deity and to life after death. None of these things must be overlooked. All this is of vast importance. But an open-minded study of what Christ actually did in the world, an inquiry into what his program really was, reveals the tremendously significant fact that Jesus purposed saving men not as individuals only but as members of society; that the salvation he offers is a salvation that has to do with the way men live in association one with another; that Christianity is something more than an "other-worldly" affair; that it is tremendously "this-worldly"; that the Work of Christ has to do not only with an offended Deity and life beyond the grave, but with the reconciliation of man with man and the life that now is as well as that which is to come.

In seeking to find an answer to the question, *What is the Program of Jesus for Human Society?* I have endeavoured to put myself in the atmosphere of the New Testament, and especially in the atmosphere of the Gospels. In order the better to do this, I have sought to understand the social, economic, and political, as well as the religious conditions of the period within which falls the earthly ministry of

Christ. For Jesus came at a certain time. He came to a certain people in a certain part of the world. Certain ideas were current; certain national hopes stirred in the breasts of his fellow-countrymen; certain plans and purposes occupied the thoughts of the best men of his day. This must be kept in mind, if we would understand Jesus.

One important thing is immediately certain. It looks out at us from almost every page of the Gospels. It sounds forth continually in the teachings of Jesus. To miss this is to miss the way at the very beginning. Jesus proposed to establish the Kingdom of God in human society. The Kingdom of God is not a Kingdom of God in the heavens. It is not an invisible Kingdom to be entered at death. It is a Kingdom to be built here and now in this present world. And he began to build this Kingdom while he lived and taught and laboured in Galilee and in Judea in the days of His flesh.

On the threshold of his ministry, Jesus faced a most serious question: What kind of kingdom was he to establish in the world? and how was he to go about setting it up?

The story of his great Temptation as recorded in the first three Gospels gives an account of his consideration of certain plausible schemes which seemed to offer a way to the attainment of his end and aim. For Jesus was really tempted. The Temptation was an actual temptation, growing out of the limitations to which he was subjected as the Son of man. It must never be forgotten that the Incarnation was a real Incarnation. As a man, Jesus fronted human difficulties and wrestled with human problems. This is mentioned at once because of the perpetual danger of robbing Christ of his real humanity and thinking of him as a being altogether other and different from ourselves.

In the Gospel according to Mark, we have the following brief account of the Baptism and Temptation:

> "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens rent asunder, and the Spirit as a dove descending upon him: and a voice

came out of the heavens, Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased.

"And straightway the Spirit driveth him forth into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him."

The account of the Struggle in the Wilderness is found in much fuller form both in Matthew and in Luke. Their accounts are practically identical, except that Luke reverses Matthew's order of the second and third temptation. Matthew's story follows:

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he afterwards hungered. And the tempter came and said to him, If thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him into the holy city; and he set

him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and on their hands they shall bear thee up, lest haply thou dash thy foot against a stone.

"Jesus said unto him, Again it is written, Thou shalt not make trial of the Lord thy God. Again the devil taketh him into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then Jesus said unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him; and behold angels came and ministered unto him."

Until recent years, it was customary to think and speak of the Temptation of Jesus as if it had been entirely a trial and test of personal character, similar in all particulars to the temptations which we as individuals have to endure. The three forms of temptation here

mentioned have been supposed to correspond to Saint John's classification, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." This interpretation was, I suppose, inevitable so long as students of the life of Christ were thinking of his ministry solely in terms of individual and personal salvation, and before we had come to understand that Jesus came to save human society as well as individual souls. Even Seeley, whose "Ecce Homo" was an epoch-making book and remains a beautiful Christian classic, does not quite rid himself of the individualistic conception of salvation, and therefore does not come to a correct interpretation of the meaning of that great battle which took place in our Lord's soul at the very outset of his career. The author of "Ecce Homo" does, however, come directly to the point when he says: "Now the story of Christ's temptation is as unique as his character. It is such a temptation as was never experienced by any one else, yet just such a temptation as Christ, and Christ in those peculiar circumstances, might be expected to experience."

It is certain, then, that it was not so much as a man battling with the problems of per-

sonal righteousness that Jesus was tempted. He was tempted as the Founder of the Kingdom of God. The Temptation had to do with the kind of Kingdom to be set up in this world and the means to be used in its establishment.

Several most plausible programs presented themselves, and each was in turn rejected.

I

The first program suggested for the building of the Kingdom was the most obvious and the most plausible. "Command that these stones become bread." "Build the Kingdom on bread. Make it the first point in your program to abolish hunger." It was suggested by the economic conditions of the times in which Jesus lived.

This temptation must have come with peculiar force to Jesus. The contrast between the wealth of the classes and the poverty of the masses was the outstanding feature of the economic order in Christ's day. The rich were few; the poor were many. The contrast was glaring: there were few homes of elegance and luxury; there were many cottages of poverty and suffering. The few were idle; the many

were toiling and suffering and dying. The wrongs of the people were far more grievous than with us now. And many patriotic men of that day had risen up against these things. Simon, the Zealot, one of the Twelve, had belonged to a band of revolutionists who sought to bring in a new order of things. It is altogether likely that what made Barabbas so popular with the crowd was that he had been a hero who had led in a movement against the conditions of life as they then were. Theudas and Judas of Galilee, to whom Gamaliel referred in his address before the Sanhedrin, were men who had been moved to action by the general social unrest of the times. In the light of all this we understand this first temptation. *Turn stones into bread. Be the poor man's Saviour. Establish the Kingdom of Plenty. Give relief to the oppressed.*

It must have come to Jesus with tremendous force. He had become fully conscious of his supernatural power. A mere word, and stones would become bread. Bread was the fundamental necessity. That was what the people needed. They were poor. They had been robbed and oppressed. Life was just one long

night of toil and hardship. They sowed and others reaped, they toiled and others were rewarded. Without relief, life was not worth living and the people could not be saved. There was real, and urgent, and immediate need. And besides this, Jesus was a poor man. His parents were the humble poor. Mary's offering, according to the kind provision of the law, was the offering of the humble poor, "And if her means suffice not for a lamb, then she shall take two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons." He had been brought up in the humble dwelling of the poor. He had served as a carpenter at the bench. He had eaten his bread in the sweat of his brow. He had slept the sleep of the man who has laboured and is weary. He had heard such talk as men talk who are utterly dissatisfied with things as they are and look for a better day.

And in addition to all this, the Messiah of the popular expectation was a temporal and earthly Messiah. As the lot of the Jew had grown more bitter, the Messianic hope had grown brighter and brighter. Their Messiah would come. He would break the yoke of the oppressor and let the oppressed go free. The

current conception of the work of the Christ finds perfect expression in Mary's "Magnificat":

"He hath put down princes from their thrones,
And hath exalted them of low degree.
The hungry he hath filled with good things;
And the rich he hath sent empty away."

There was not one among the teachers of that time who had any other idea but that the Messiah was to be a temporal Messiah who would set up the Kingdom of Plenty in which "the hungry were to be filled with good things." Thus all the prophets had been interpreted. It is not to be wondered at, then, that the first suggestion that came to Jesus was in harmony with the popular thought of his day. And it is not to be wondered at that this temptation made its appeal to Jesus. There is much that can be said in favour of this plan.

This same temptation makes its appeal to us of the twentieth century, and there are many good people who have yielded to it. It appeals to them because they are good men; otherwise it could not have appealed to Jesus. There is much good in it, and it is the good that is in

it that makes a powerful appeal. Work of this sort must be done and must be done by the Church. If we do not do it, we do not have the spirit of Christ. "Whoso hath this world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" And Christianity must do more than this. It must not only seek to help individuals who are in need; it must seek to save society as a whole. The Church is interested in the total life of the world. No Christian can remain indifferent to the evils present in the life of modern society. Questions concerning capital and labour, concerning riches and poverty, are all, at bottom, moral questions and must be settled in the light of the ethics of Jesus. The Church that holds utterly aloof from great questions of reform is out of touch with the age in which we live and will surely have its candlestick removed out of its place.

And just here lies our peril. Just here is the temptation that is making a mighty appeal to good people to-day. It is, in essence, the very temptation which made Jesus feel its power. *Give pensions to the aged, let the government*

take care of the sick, give insurance for the unemployed, reduce the work-hours of the labouring man, let each man have his share of the wealth of the state, then the Kingdom of God will come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven!

Such methods do make an immediate appeal. They justify themselves at once to the average mind. When Jesus had fed the five thousand with the five loaves and two small fishes, and all the people had enough and were satisfied, and took up twelve baskets full of fragments that remained over; they said: "This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world," and they were ready to come and take him by force and make him a king, so that he had to withdraw from them and go into the mountain himself alone.

But feeding the hungry was not primary with Jesus. "I am the Bread of Life" was the truth which he sought to teach the world. And the primary mission of the Church of Jesus is spiritual, and the means to be used are spiritual means. Everything else is incidental and secondary, and when used must be used with this in view.

Christianity works chiefly from within outward, not from without inward. The Kingdom of God is not a temporal affair, such as the Jews took it to be; it is something other and better than just a more comfortable world, such as some of our social reformers insist that it must be. It is not written: "Except the kingdom of God come ye cannot be born again"; but rather "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

A story is told of an ignorant French peasant and his family, that during the Revolution, a hundred years ago, when everything was topsy-turvy, he moved up into a noble old castle. But in a short time he had moved his pig-sty in with all the pigs! It took something more than a castle and wealth to make a gentleman of him. There is no certainty whatsoever that the more comfortable world would be a more religious world. There is no assurance at all that better fed men will be Christian men. Alas! we have often seen it otherwise. In the days of men's poverty they have sought God, but in the days of plenty they have forgotten him.

Jesus distinctly and forever rejected this method of procedure—the method of making

life comfortable. The moral and spiritual is absolutely central and fundamental in Christianity. Christians will, indeed, visit the sick and clothe the naked and feed the hungry; even the heathen must do that much. And Christians will seek to discover the sources of evil and heal the open sores of the world. But always the emphasis must be laid on the spiritual and not on the material. Jesus repelled the plausible temptation with the words: "It is written. Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "Man wants no reminding that he lives by bread. There is no fear of his not giving care enough to the needs of his body; but there is danger lest he should think of nothing but these needs, and starve his soul." Man's relation to God is the first thing—not his relation to bread. The salvation of the soul is the prime consideration—not the reign of plenty.

II

The second program that Jesus considered and rejected came in the following form: "Then the devil taketh him into the holy city and he

set him on the pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou art the Son of God, cast thyself down." It came out of the religious condition of the Jews of that period.

And here the particular stands for the general. Work not one miracle, but many. Enter upon a miracle-working ministry, in which the working of miracles shall be the central thing. *Appeal to the spectacular. Do the sensational. Compel men to believe whether they will or not.*

There was much to be said in favour of a program of this kind. The great prophets of Israel had made much of signs. Moses was a worker of miracles. It was amid the wonders of the burning bush that his call to deliver Israel had come. The staff in his hand had become a serpent when he cast it down; and when he took it up again, it had turned into a wonder-working rod with which he wrought the marvels which astonished Egypt and delivered the children of Israel from bondage. When it was uplifted, the Red Sea opened a path for the people of God, and at its touch water gushed out of the rock in the wilderness. And the Jews looked for signs. As children are taught by object lessons, so had God taught

the Jews with signs. Furthermore, the people fully expected their Messiah to bring in an era of miracles, the greatest in their history. As Saint Paul said: "The Jews require signs." It will be remembered also that unbelieving Jews said to Jesus: "What then doest thou for a sign, that we may see and believe thee? What workest thou? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat." And even when Jesus was hanging on the cross they taunted him with his inability to work a miracle that would satisfy them. "If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we will believe."

Jesus did indeed work miracles; but they were secondary and incidental. It was to *teach* and to *save* that he came into this world. He would work miracles only as they served his great spiritual purpose. He was himself a miracle, and miracles were as natural to him as ordinary works to ordinary men. And being the incarnation of love, it was but natural that in the presence of sorrow and suffering his divine power should flow out in sympathy and in healing.

But what is important to understand is that the method of display, the method of overwhelming the intellect and compelling men to believe, he distinctly rejected.

To the Church of our times, this temptation comes in different ways.

1. *It comes in the form of the spectacular in worship.*

Now Christian worship is a very simple affair. "God is spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." *Place* matters little, and *form* matters not at all, if only the spirit of man meets the Spirit of the Living God. And nothing could be more simple than the worship of the early Christians as they gathered in some quiet Christian home and sang praises to Jesus, and told of his salvation.

But very soon in the history of the Church the forms of worship began to be elaborated and beautified. In his "Confessions," Augustine tells in simple evangelical language the story of his conversion. But there are some things which Augustine does not tell, and which possibly he himself did not fully understand. Augustine lived at a time when the Roman

Empire was decaying and the early Church was fitting into the forms of the old empire. The magnificence which belonged to the old empire was being transferred to the Church. The Church at Milan impressed the imagination of Augustine. The great Ambrose was preacher there. He had made the services of the Church more beautiful than ever. He had introduced musical methods, especially antiphonal chanting, hitherto unknown in Italy. All this had its influence on Augustine and is to be taken into account when offering an explanation of his conversion. For magnificent cathedrals, and vested choirs, and elaborate ritual do make a very strong appeal to minds of a certain type. And this has its uses as well as its abuses.

I am far from discounting art and music. I am not speaking with contempt of the æsthetic and the emotional. But I do call attention to the fact that *æsthetic delight* is one thing and *religious emotion* altogether another thing. The greatest musicians have not always been great in moral character and in Christian life. We have all been surprised and shocked at the scandals connected with the private lives of certain great musicians. Æstheticism may be

highly developed, and morality practically nil. The constant danger is lest one shall mistake æsthetic delight for religious fervour. Take the case of Handel. We have listened with wonder to his marvellous "Messiah." It is said that when he was composing that great oratorio he would often burst into tears. A friend coming in when he was setting music to the words, "He was despised and rejected of men," found him sobbing. His servant bringing his chocolate would sometimes find him weeping as he composed. He said of his feelings as he composed the "Hallelujah Chorus": "I did think I did see all heaven before me and the great God himself." And yet at that very time, he was passionate, and intemperate, and profane, and ungodly! The trouble with all this sort of thing is that it does not necessarily lift men morally; and it may even deceive men—they may come to believe themselves moral and devoutly religious when they are mere æsthetes.

The æsthetic is indeed from God and must be used in his service. Art and music are God's servants, and wonderfully useful servants they are. To use them, and not to be used by them, is the duty of the Church. To make them min-

isters before the altar of Christ, and not themselves objects of our adoration—this is the duty of Christianity.

2. *The temptation to a ministry of display comes to the Church of our day in another form, namely, in the form of sensationalism in the pulpit.*

Just as Satan said to Jesus: "Cast thyself down from the pinnacle of the temple," so does the modern temptation come: *Do the unusual. Get into the press. Shock the modest.*

At no time did Jesus yield to this temptation. It came to him later from the lips of his own brethren. They said to him: "No man doeth anything in secret, and himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou doest these things, manifest thyself to the world." It was the pinnacle temptation over again in a somewhat different form. But Jesus chose the method of modesty, the method of self-effacement. He said to those whom he healed that they must not publish his miracles abroad. He withdrew into quiet places. He escaped from the crowds when their enthusiasm was about to sweep them off their feet. Certainly he did declare himself. At proper times and in proper

ways he made himself and his mission known. But considering who he was, and on what mission he had come into this world, possibly nothing is more surprising than the modesty of Jesus. "I am meek and lowly in heart" is a description which tells precisely what his spirit was. The principle of the cross runs through the entire life and ministry of our Lord.

And the principle of the cross must be seen in the life and ministry of the Lord's servants. In recent years the Church has been suffering from an epidemic of cheap sensationalism. The Tempter has said: *"Cast thyself down from the pinnacle of the temple. Startle the people. Astonish the crowds."* And alas, many have straightway yielded to the voice of Satan! Certain professional evangelists have gone throughout the land outraging every reverent feeling and driving from us the modest and the thoughtful. And pastors too sometimes fall under the same temptation. It is shocking to think of themes which are sometimes discussed from the pulpit. If one should judge from the announcements of sermons for Sunday in some of our daily papers, one would think that the least and last thing the preacher

had to do was to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. One should suffer the loss of his right arm before selling his ministry at so cheap a price. I am weary of being told that such methods "get results." I know well what the "results" are. "Conversions" which convert a man *from nothing to nothing!* Crowds that know nothing of reverence and of worship! And then when the true shepherd comes who seeks to lead to green pastures and still waters, there is no desire for anything so tame!

3. *This entire appeal to the spectacular and the sensational proceeds on a wrong assumption, namely, the theory that spiritual ends may be achieved by use of something other and lower than spiritual means.*

But doubt and denial can never be overcome by compulsion and display. When music and art convey spiritual truths and make a spiritual impression, then they are properly used in the service of religion—and only then. When Christian truth is presented in attractive form, it will shine in its own light without the need of crass sensationalism to force a way for it. The soul of man can be won by instruction and

by appeal, but can never be carried by assault. If men are to believe, they must believe freely. The human will cannot be overridden. Spiritual ends must be spiritually achieved. A man's belief is his own belief, and believing cannot be forced. Unless his own mind and will gladly receive the truth, the truth cannot be effective in influencing his life for good. To use the language of another: "If our Lord had displayed a sign of overwhelming effect, and bidden men deny it if they could, he would have paralysed intellectual growth in mankind. Men had been gifted with faculties fitting them to explore and judge of spiritual things: if these were curtailed of room for exercise, they would languish like limbs disused." [2]

Faith, I repeat, can never be forced. The effort to compel faith may destroy it. Dogmatism and denunciation will never make Christians out of unbelievers. Signing a creed under threat of loss of place and popular favour will lead directly to hypocrisy. Second-hand belief never controls life. Men must believe at first hand if they are really to believe at all. Faith is an intimate and personal thing grow-

[2] Latham, *Pastor Pastorum*, p. 142.

ing out of the moral attitude of the soul to Christ. And nowhere does external authority seem more out of place than when by anathemas it would seek to control in spiritual affairs. If the Kingdom of Heaven is to come, it must come by the gentle wooings of God's Spirit, by the appeal that truth makes to the mind of man, and by the constraining love of Christ as seen in his matchless life and in his sacrificial death.

III

A third plan of action was suggested in the following form: "Again the devil taketh him unto an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and he saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." This program was in accord with the spirit of the age.

It was a natural and inevitable temptation. Jesus had come to establish his Kingdom in this world. But there was already another kingdom established there. Why not make use of that kingdom in setting up the Kingdom of God? For are not all the kingdoms of this

world his by every right? Why wait for the slow centuries to drag out their weary length? Why not lay hold on the power of the government and make the empire subserve his will? But Jesus answered: "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

And this answer must be our answer. For this temptation is felt just as strongly in the twentieth century as it was when Jesus first faced the plausible schemes presented by the tempter.

Unfortunately there came a day when the Church surrendered. Among the first Christians, the weapons of warfare were not temporal but spiritual. And they were mighty under God to the pulling down of strongholds. By the sincerity of their faith, by the holiness of their lives, and by the power of self-sacrificing service, those first Christians bore witness to the truth. And the truth conquered. Silently the gospel spread—slowly at first, and then more rapidly until Christianity had become the mightiest force in the Roman Empire. Then a tragic thing happened—Constantine professed conversion. The Emperor himself

became a Christian. But his was a political conversion, not a spiritual change. He believed it good politics to proclaim himself a Christian. At heart he remained a heathen. The vast influence of the Imperial government was thrown on the side of Christianity. Preachers and teachers bowed down and worshipped Satan, thinking thus to take possession of the world in the name of the Lord Jesus. It was the Empire that conquered. It was Christianity that surrendered.

The entire principle is wrong. The Kingdom of God cannot be advanced by political methods. The Puritans in England made an effort on a great scale to do this very thing. And in the end they made a failure. The aim of the Puritan was to set up a visible Kingdom of God. Under the Commonwealth, the State was looked upon as an instrument for securing, through its political and social influences, the religious and moral ends of the Church. Englishmen were the Lord's people, a people dedicated to him by a solemn covenant, and whose end, as a nation, was to carry out his will. Godliness became the chief qualification for public office. The ranks of the army were

filled with "saints." But Puritanism failed. As Green says: "It was impossible to distinguish between the saint and the hypocrite as soon as godliness became profitable. . . . The attempt to secure spiritual results by material force had failed, as it always fails." And then the fearful reaction set in.

This temptation comes to the Church with great power to-day. But the Church will yield at the peril of her life.

Two things must be clearly understood:

The first is that Church and State must remain separate. Whenever the Church has sought to use the State and to control it in the interests of religion, religion has always suffered and the State also has suffered. Very much the same results follow whether it be Romanism or Protestantism. The conclusion is that the insistence of the Church must be primarily on the supremacy of the spiritual.

The other thing to be clearly understood is that all society and all human institutions must come under the power of the gospel. Christianity is a leaven which is finally to leaven the whole lump. Christ shall reign till he has put all his enemies under his feet. He shall

not fail nor be discouraged till he hath set justice in the earth and the waiting isles have received his law. The day is coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess him Lord to the glory of God the Father. The social order must itself be Christianised. But it must not be forgotten that the social order is not something separate and apart from the men and women who make society. "The social order" is just the way men and women live. You change the order just as you change their way of living. You change their way of living just as you change them. But there is something further to be said. As the number of Christians increases, the spirit of Christ will more and more permeate society. Just so the institution of slavery disappeared from among Christian people. Thus it came about that public gambling has been everywhere outlawed. And so also it came to pass that the saloon was doomed. First the conscience of Christian people was aroused; then the conscience of others under the influence of a Christian civilisation awoke; until now we have seen the end of that accursed institution. And there are other problems to be solved. The age-long cry of the poor has come up into the

ears of Jehovah. It has reached the heart of God-fearing men and women, so that they can scarcely sleep for thinking of it. And this also shall be set right in God's good time.

And just as Christ becomes to men a personal Saviour, does he become to the world a Reformer. Take the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century as an illustration. The appeal of Wesley and those associated with him was first of all to the spiritual and eternal. His gospel was a spiritual gospel. The guilt of sin, the worth of the soul, the Sacrifice of Christ, the joy of sins forgiven, the privilege of salvation from all sins—these were the mighty themes of Evangelical preaching. And this gospel saved England. As John Richard Green says: "The Methodists themselves were the least result of the Methodist Revival. In the nation at large appeared a new moral enthusiasm, whose power was seen in the disappearance of the profligacy which had infected the upper classes, and the foulness which had infested literature ever since the Reformation. A yet nobler result of the religious revival was the steady attempt, which has never ceased from that day to this, to rem-

edy the guilt, the ignorance, the physical sufferings, the social degradation of the profligate and the poor."

Lord Morley is quoted as saying, "The central moral doctrine of the French Revolution was that human nature is good, and that the evil in the world is the result of bad education and bad institutions." And this philosophical and scientific heresy still clings to much of our modern teaching and effort. But the evil lies in men themselves, and the cure for human ills is to be found in *persons* and not in *things*—in *men* rather than in *institutions* and *laws*.

From all such bypaths Jesus turned away. He pitched his whole program on a different principle. Not the building of the *Kingdom of Plenty*—not *a spectacular manifestation of power,* such as would convince men against their will—*not the methods of political compromise*—none of these would Jesus adopt for the advancement of his Kingdom. From all these he turned utterly away.

And Jesus took instead *the Way of Living, the Way of Teaching, the Way of Serving,* and *the Way of Dying.*

And so he came to his throne.

Lecture II

Jesus Transcends Jewish Apocalyptic

"The kingdom of God is within you."
—*Luke* 17:21.

Lecture II

JESUS TRANSCENDS JEWISH APOCALYPTIC

We have seen how Jesus turned aside from certain plausible methods of procedure suggested by the economic, the religious, and the political conditions of the times in which he lived. He rejected every scheme that had to do primarily with *things;* he adopted a program which dealt first of all with *persons,* and with things incidentally, and only as they had influence on personal character.

It is important now to observe that Jesus came into a religious society which had very definite ideas of what the Messiah was to do and how he was to do it. A whole class of writers had agreed on the main outlines of the Messianic program. These writers are known as the *Apocalyptists.* By far the noblest of these writings is the book which has found a place in the canon of the Old Testament, namely, the Book of Daniel. But in the latter

period of Jewish history there were many others which were widely read and well known by the Jews of that time. The Book of Enoch is one of the most important of these. It is quoted in our New Testament book of Jude. "It is quite plain that this apocalypse either exerted a considerable influence on the generations immediately before and contemporaneous with Jesus, or at least reflects a large number of ideas which were in the minds of men of these generations and are not accounted for by the Old Testament." Other apocalypses are the Sibylline Oracles, the Psalms of Solomon, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, the Book of Jubilees, Second Esdras, the Apocalypse of Baruch, the Assumption of Moses, and the Apocalypse of Abraham. All these and other apocalypses were written about the time of Jesus. They show conclusively that at this time the Jews were thinking of the Messianic Kingdom, not in prophetic terms, but in the highly imaginative terms of apocalyptic.

Apocalyptic is distinctly a lower form of sacred literature than the prophetic. The prophets believed in the nearness of God, and in the triumph of righteousness by the prog-

ress of spiritual forces. Their loftiest view of Messiah is in the Suffering Servant of Jehovah passages in Isaiah, as in the following beautiful passage:

> "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold; my chosen in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the Gentiles. He will not cry, nor lift up his voice, nor cause it to be heard in the street. A bruised reed will he not break, and a dimly burning wick will he not quench: he will bring forth justice in truth. He will not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set justice in the earth; and the isles shall wait for his law."

With the apocalyptists, God has retired into the distance and the past. He is the transcendent Deity. The times are evil, and sure to get worse. Spiritual forces are entirely inadequate to meet the situation. The powers of the unseen world must be brought into play. God is a God of vengeance, he will mightily manifest himself and crush his enemies. The Jews are his chosen people, and he will honour

them to the confusion of their foes. Take the following from the Book of Enoch, by way of illustration:

"And this Son of man whom thou hast seen
Shall put down the kings and the mighty
from their seats,
And the strong from their thrones,
And shall loosen the reins of the strong,
And break the teeth of the sinners.
And he shall put down the kings from their
thrones and kingdoms
Because they do not extol and praise him,
Nor humbly acknowledge whence the king-
dom was bestowed upon them."

. . . . .

"And the righteous and elect shall be saved
on that day,
And they shall never thenceforth see the
face of the sinners and the unrighteous.
And the Lord of spirits shall abide over them,
And with the Son of man shall they eat
And lie down and rise up forever and ever."

There were, then, two general modes of thought current in the days of Jesus, namely,

the *prophetic* and the *apocalyptic*. If Jesus was to speak so as to be understood, he must needs speak in the language of the times. If he was to be understood, he must speak in prophetic language or in the language of apocalyptic. Certainly apocalyptic made the popular appeal, the appeal to the imagination and to passion as well. The question here raised is, What program did Jesus approve? What method did he adopt? For our answer we must go to the New Testament itself.

We may take for our present use an important passage in Mark, a part of which is as follows:

> "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall ye see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send forth the angels, and shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost parts of the earth to the uttermost parts of the heaven.

"Now from the fig tree learn her parable: when her branch is now become tender, and putteth forth its leaves, ye know that the summer is nigh; even so ye also, when ye see these things coming to pass, know ye that he is nigh, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, until all these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

I have just said that for our answer to the question whether or not Jesus adopted the apocalyptic program, we must go to the New Testament. I have quoted part of an important eschatological discourse to show that Jesus did make large use of current apocalyptical modes of thought. But just here many questions arise which are not altogether easy to answer with entire satisfaction. Some of them are as follows: Is it not certain that in reporting what Jesus said, the disciples were not clear in making a distinction between the prophecy con-

cerning the destruction of Jerusalem and the prophecy concerning the consummation of the Christian age? Just as in the Sermon on the Mount and in the account of Jesus' parabolical teachings, it is clear that many things spoken at different times have been brought together as if uttered in one discourse, is it not certain also that various sayings of Jesus touching Last Things have been grouped together by the Evangelists, making it difficult if not impossible, to disentangle these discourses concerning the Coming of the Son of man? Is it not extremely likely that the minds of the disciples of our Lord were so filled with thoughts of a spectacular apocalyptic sort that certain sayings of Jesus took on a somewhat different character in their thinking from what he had originally intended?

It is quite clear that there are many passages of an apocalyptic character in the writings of the apostles, not to make mention of the outstanding example of a Christian Apocalypse, the Revelation of John. As Beckwith says: "The Messianic hope of the Christian Church, the intense expectation of the Lord's return, and the inauguration of 'the coming age'

formed a fertile soil for just this kind of writing. In the evils of 'this present world,' in the sufferings which everywhere met or threatened the new community, the Christians turned with eager look to the future. They adopted the familiar Jewish apocalypses as expressions of their hope, they found comfort and encouragement in them; they Christianised them by working them over and adding to them; they wrote apocalypses of their own." [1]

I

We come then to the question: Did Jesus approve and take over and adopt the apocalyptic program?

There are many interpreters of Jesus who are convinced that the Program of Jesus is strictly an apocalyptic program.

There is a considerable number of scholars who take the position that the entire ministry of Jesus was on an eschatological basis. They hold that he looked for a speedy end of the world, that he expected in a miraculous way to display his power and glory, coming in judg-

[1] "Apocalypse of John," pp. 196-197.

ment upon the wicked generation in which he lived. They hold that his announcement, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," meant nothing less and nothing more than, "Get ready for impending doom upon the wicked." In their view, therefore, the ethical teachings of Jesus are not of permanent value. They were valid only for the supposed short interval before his mighty power was to be displayed. According to them, Jesus did not instruct his disciples to try to improve the moral condition of society, and he had no missionary message for the world. In a word, his teachings were only "interim ethics." We are to do good to those that hate us, not so much to benefit them, as to prove that we ourselves are free from enmity and selfishness. We are to pray for our enemies, not primarily to help them, but because such prayer is a charm against hatred and bitterness. His teaching was intended for the "present world" with its evils and adversities; in the "coming age" no such teachings would be needed, for conditions would all be miraculously changed. We do not wonder that men who hold this view are of opinion that Jesus

would be entirely out of place in the modern world in which we now live, and that his teachings are entirely inapplicable to present day social, economic, interracial, and international conditions.

There are other scholars who do not go quite so far. They agree that Jesus' program was wholly an apocalyptic one; but they maintain, nevertheless, that his ethics are of eternal value. E. F. Scott, for instance, writes as follows:

> "It is commonly assumed, more or less consciously that men themselves must bring the Kingdom into being. The very program of Christianity, as it is often understood in our days, is to establish the Kingdom of God on earth by the concerted effort of all good men. To Jesus this conception would have been meaningless, and even repellent. The Kingdom as he knew it, was God's, and men could no more establish it than they could make the sun rise in heaven. To keep this clear in our minds is vital to our whole understanding of Jesus. His attitude was always that of waiting on God,

of trust in a divine wisdom and power which are working on our behalf and will accomplish for us what we cannot do ourselves." [2]

It is hardly necessary for me to say that I no more agree with this interpretation of the mind of Jesus than I do with the other just mentioned. And I shall give abundant reason for my disagreement. But that will come later.

There can be no question that in the early centuries, following the apostolic age, the view held touching the Kingdom of God was largely eschatological. In the despair that filled all minds attendant upon the wreck of Roman civilisation, the hearts of men turned upward in longing for supernatural interposition. And this view continued all through the middle ages. It finds expression in one of the noblest hymns ever written, the well-known Latin judgment hymn of the 13th or 14th centuries, beginning:

"Dies iræ, dies illa,
Solvet sæclum et favilla,
Teste David cum Sibylla."

[2] "The Ethical Teaching of Jesus," p. 48.

One of the best translations of this is, in part, as follows:

"Day of wrath! that day dismaying;
As the seers of old were saying,
All the world in ashes laying.

"What the fear! and what the quaking!
When the Judge his way is taking,
Strictest search in all things making.

"When the trump with blast astounding,
Through the tombs of earth resounding,
Bids all stand, the throne surrounding.

"Death and nature all aghast are,
While the dead rise fast and faster,
Answering to their Judge and Master."

And throughout all the centuries there have been pure and saintly souls who have lived in hourly expectation of the second coming of the Lord. Over and over again the hymns of the Church echo this expectation.

In recent years there has been a new birth of apocalyptic interpretation and speculation. Never before has such an extensive literature been produced, and never before has premil-

lenarianism been preached with more passion. Indeed, an entire theology of premillenarianism has been produced; and this theology has by its advocates been erected into a standard and test of fundamental orthodoxy. It would lead us too far afield to enter into a detailed criticism of the modern apocalyptic conception of the program of Jesus. Briefly we set down our main objections:

1. It takes over and makes its own the chief features of the Jewish apocalypses which, as we shall see, were entirely transcended by Jesus in his teachings concerning the Kingdom of God.

2. Like every other purely apocalyptic scheme it is essentially pessimistic. The world is getting worse all the time, and must needs get worse still. With the modern premillenarian the progress of iniquity is a ground of hope.

3. While it does not go so far as to talk about the "interim ethics" of Jesus, nevertheless it discredits the value of the teachings of Christ and maintains that they are not adequate to the needs of the world of to-day.

4. Its conception of God is not in harmony

with the teachings of Jesus, nor is it in keeping with the lofty utterances of the Old Testament prophets. It is in perfect accord with the God of Jewish apocalypse—a God remote, separate from the world of men and things, a vengeful God and not the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

5. It falls into the identical error of the Scribes and Pharisees and with wooden literalness interprets the prophets as looking for a temporal Messiah who shall reign at Jerusalem and bring great power and glory to the Jews.

6. It denies *in toto* that the Church is in the world for the salvation of human society. It maintains that the uplift of society is a perversion of the gospel. It holds that the one work of the Church is the saving of as many individuals as possible. It insists that the present world is doomed to destruction, and that Christians have nothing whatsoever to do with bringing in the Kingdom. It teaches that the Kingdom of God is not now in the world; that human agency and human co-operation can have nothing to do with its coming; and that when it comes it will come miraculously and

suddenly as the result of God's action, not man's.

In this brief and hurried survey it is not possible to do more than indicate how perfectly modern premillenarianism corresponds with Jewish noncanonical apocalyptic. A mere glance at the literature referred to will satisfy any one at this point. But we cannot any more accept the interpretation of these more orthodox Christians than we can follow the lead of the radical critics. *Both err at the same point: they seize hold of one aspect of the teaching of Jesus and make it central and determinative in all their thinking. Moreover, the aspect which they make central is not central in the Gospels.*

II

That apocalyptic occupies a place and an important place in the teachings of Jesus is freely granted. However, the view here taken is that the repeated and consistent utterances of the Master touching the moral and spiritual nature of the Kingdom of God and touching its presence and progress in the world, are so full and so plain that they must have first con-

sideration in any correct interpretation of the purpose of Jesus in human society; and that when this is our method of approach, it soon becomes clear that while Jesus used, as use he must, the thought-forms of the day in which he lived, he used them freely—*and transcended them.*

We find ourselves unable to agree with those critics who hold that apocalyptic had no place at all in the original and genuine teachings of Jesus. We cannot agree with them that the eschatological element in the Gospels has been brought in solely from Jewish sources. We cannot do so for the reason that there is no evidence that this is the case. The theory evidently arises from the desire to get rid of a very difficult problem. But our way out of the difficulty does not lie in that direction. We, therefore, recognise the existence of the apocalyptic element as genuine and original.

It is altogether likely, however, that the original sayings of Jesus touching the destruction of Jerusalem and the consummation of the age, have been considerably coloured by the intellectual prepossessions of the early disciples. Indeed, this would seem to have been inevitable.

They could only see with the eyes they had and hear with their own ears. Often and often Jesus reproved them for their slowness to understand what he said to them. That the first disciples did expect an early second coming of our Lord is as certain as anything can be. That they were mistaken in that expectation in so far as its literal realisation was concerned, of course, goes without saying.

Jesus, it will be remembered, himself confessed to ignorance touching this very matter. The "day and the hour" were known to no man, nor to the angels, and not even to the Son, but to the Father alone. And it is surely not taking away anything from his dignity to say that it is certain that his earthly ministry was conducted under human limitations. Quite early the Church condemned as a heresy the doctrine that the Incarnation was not actual and real, but seeming only. In recent years the ancient heresy of Docetism has reasserted itself and we find men contending that Christ, in the days of his humiliation, was filled with omniscience. It need hardly be said that the view of the person of our Lord, which I hold, is the very highest. I am, therefore, only re-

affirming the historic and orthodox view of the Incarnation when I declare that Jesus carried on his work in the world under human limitations. Such knowledge was his as was necessary to his redemptive mission—that and no more. What could be more natural and inevitable, then, than that Jesus should use the thought-forms of his own age, and that, in speaking to his disciples of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God, he should have used language that was on everybody's tongue.

A question might be raised as to whether or not Jesus took apocalyptic literally, or used it figuratively. And, indeed, this very question ought to be raised in reference to the original intent and purpose of the writers of apocalyptic. The apocalyptists thought in pictures of a very highly imaginative sort. After all, it was not so much the "thought-picture" that the writer of apocalyptic was interested in as the moral truth he intended to convey. His stern faith in righteousness and the ultimate triumph of God over all foes—this is the message of the apocalyptist. And this, too, we may be certain, is what Jesus had in mind when he used this method of teaching. I think that

A. G. Hogg has the right solution of the problem. He writes:

> "We do not treat it seriously if we allow ourselves to imagine that without any creative reaction of His own mind, Jesus took over a ready-made apocalyptic program. That an intellect of such obvious originality and independence as His should have slavishly adhered to the letter of any apocalyptic tradition is an absurd supposition. If He shared at all the apocalyptic impulse, it would be as One for whom imagery of an apocalyptical type was a spontaneous vehicle of self-expression. Now apocalyptical imagery was originally and essentially the language of vision and conjecture. Hence the more genuinely Jesus had imbibed the apocalyptical spirit, the more instinctively would He reserve its forms of thought for topics on which precision and certainty failed Him. Presumably it is in this instinctive faithfulness to the genius of apocalyptic, rather than in any lack of interest in apocalyptical ideas, that we are to find the explanation why there is so little of the apocalyptic element in His

public teaching. The bulk of that teaching would naturally concern itself with certainties, and speculation would here be allowed to furnish no more than the minimum of imaginative drapery required to clothe those expectations which were with Jesus matters of conviction." [3]

III

With Jesus "the Kingdom of God" was something more and other than a future irruption of mysterious forces out of the invisible world which should upset and transform the present world order. With Jesus the Kingdom was a present reality. Jesus was concerned far more about a "new creature" than about a "new creation." Not to bring in a transformed physical universe did Jesus teach and labour, but to transform human hearts and minds and to build the Kingdom of God in the souls of faithful disciples.

Once when Jesus was asked the direct question, as to "when the kingdom of God cometh," he made the direct reply: "The kingdom of

[3] "Redemption from This World," pp. 94-95.

God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." If one prefers the other translation, "the kingdom of God is in your midst," it comes to practically the same thing. The Kingdom is not an outward affair, it is within, in the heart and life; and wherever Jesus and his loyal followers were they carried the Kingdom about with them. Again, in speaking of John the Baptist, Jesus says: "Among them that are born of women there hath not arisen a greater than John the Baptist: yet he that is but little in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." Certainly Jesus did not mean to exclude John the Baptist from some future kingdom in which the righteous dead were to participate. What he did say was that with his own coming and ministry the Kingdom of Heaven was among men in some sense in which John did not know it.

Indeed, it is certain that the teachings of Jesus cannot be understood at all unless we see that he means that the Kingdom of God is a present existing reality, not merely a future cataclysmic event. By far the larger

part of the teachings of Jesus is concerned with the Kingdom of God as a present reality. The regular form with which he introduces his inimitable parables is, "the kingdom of heaven is like" this, or like that. Take several parables by way of illustration: The Kingdom of Heaven is like "the sower," like "mustard seed," like "leaven," like "treasure hid in the field," like "a merchant seeking goodly pearls," like "a net cast into the sea," and many others which can have no meaning unless the Kingdom of Heaven is thought of as a present reality, here and now in this world.

The fact is Jesus' message was too big for apocalyptic forms; it simply broke through and escaped. It is spiritual and therefore universal.

Study the Sermon on the Mount. That cannot be cramped into apocalyptic moulds. That has to do with the character of individuals, with their conduct in human society, with the way Christian men must behave in human relationships. Take, by way of illustration, the Beatitudes. These all show the character of the men out of whom Jesus will build his Kingdom. And the blessings pronounced on them

do not have to do with some future age, but with this present life.

> "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
>
> "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
>
> "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
>
> "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
>
> "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
>
> "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
>
> "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Children of God."

Immediately following this description of the character of the men who belong to the Kingdom of God, there follows this exhortation:

> "Ye are the salt of the earth. Ye are the light of the world. Let your light so shine before men; that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

And the Sermon on the Mount closes with the beautiful passage about trust in our Father's care, in the heart of which are these words:

> "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

If we were called upon to say exactly what the Kingdom of God is, what would be our definition? Jesus at no time defined it. He was always talking about it. He spoke of it under all sorts of figures. It was too great and too wonderful to be summed up in a neat and final phrase. He did not present it that way. But we may be pardoned if we endeavour to generalise from the teachings of the Master and give two or three definitions which may help us on our way to a more perfect understanding.

Professor A. B. Bruce suggests the following:

> "The reign of divine love exercised by God in his grace over human hearts believ-

ing in his love, and constrained thereby to yield him grateful affection and devoted service." [4]

Professor Rush Rhees puts his definition briefly as:

"A new order of life in which men have come to love and obey God as their Father, and to love and live for men as their brothers." [5]

Professor Bosworth writes of the Kingdom more fully;

"The Kingdom was to be a world civilisation in which honesty and friendliness in personal life and social institutions would be made universal and secure, a civilisation in which all men as sons of God, the Heavenly Father, would work together in a powerful, true and faithful brotherhood at all the varied tasks to be set for them by the unfolding will of God." [6]

[4] "The Kingdom of God," p. 46.
[5] "The Life of Jesus," p. 237.
[6] "The Life and Teaching of Jesus," p. 244.

IV

It is of interest to observe how, while apocalyptic conceptions persisted and had large place in the thinking of the apostolic Church, that even there they were gradually transcended. Note especially the following:

1. *It is not the eschatological view of Christ and his work that has first and foremost place in the early Church; it is the glorious experience of his immediate presence in the hearts of believers and an appreciation of the moral and spiritual aspects of the gospel.*

The presence of the Spirit of God in individual Christians, in the gathering together of believers, and in the transformed lives of all who trusted in Jesus made it perfectly plain that *the New Age had already begun.* "The kingdom of God," writes Paul, "is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Where righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit were, there had the Kingdom of God already appeared. As a matter of fact, the spiritual reality promised in apocalyptic prophecies had been granted in the outpouring of the Holy

Spirit. The sense of the nearness of Christ, victory over doubts and fears, power to overcome sin, and strength to endure affliction—a joy that was unspeakable and full of glory—all this had come to the disciples of Jesus. There had opened to them a "new heaven," and that had created "a new earth." Apocalyptic dreams were as nothing compared with the actual experience of "the powers of the age to come" which was theirs.

2. *In the Fourth Gospel the apocalyptical view of the Kingdom of God has dropped completely out of sight. The eschatological view of the Kingdom as something future and distant has been entirely superseded.*

In the coming of the Holy Spirit all that had been looked forward to that was really worth while in the imaginative picture-thinking of apocalyptists had been fully realised. The disciples of Jesus had already entered upon the enjoyment of "eternal life"—life, that is to say, having the quality of the eternal world. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." The promised Return of the Redeemer has

already taken place in a spiritual sense. "It is expedient for you," Jesus says, "that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I go I will send him unto you." "A little while and ye behold me no more; and again a little while, and ye shall see me." It is clear that the Fourth Gospel knows nothing of the doctrine of an absentee Christ and of a cataclysmic and destructive "second coming" so much insisted on by our modern premillenarians.

3. *There can be little doubt that we are able to see a similar change taking place in the outlook of Saint Paul.*

When he wrote the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, his viewpoint was emphatically apocalyptical. At that time he was confidently expecting, along with other Christians then living, to be "caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." But by the time he wrote his great epistle to the Ephesians, he had passed clean beyond that view. The theme of that epistle is the eternal purpose of God in Christ working itself out in the world through the Church. And the Christ of that epistle is not absent, but present in his Church

which is his "body." When God raised Christ from the dead, he "made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." As George Matheson, the blind poet-preacher, puts it: "Paul had felt that instead of needing to wait for the advent of heaven to earth, he himself had already made his advent from earth into heaven. He had been translated without seeing death. He had been borne aloft in the third heaven. He had been carried up into the very bosom of the Master and made to lie upon his breast. He had been allowed to anticipate the second advent, to enter here on earth into the fellowship, the communion, the citizenship of the life everlasting." Thus the apostle Paul, in his Christian experience and in the process of the development of his thinking, eventually transcended Jewish apocalyptic. The new wine had burst the old bottles. The

old form could not forever imprison and hold fast the new spirit of Christianity.

4. *And it is a significant and revealing fact that in obedience to Jesus' command the apostles and early disciples of our Lord went forth to make all the world Christian.*

Matthew records that Jesus had said: "Go make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Critics have raised a question touching the genuineness of this passage. But I see no reason for doubting that we have here a true word of Jesus Christ. And, to say the least, there can certainly be no doubt that we have here the apostolic understanding of the implications of the gospel and the obligation that rested upon the Church to make the whole world Christian. For certain it is that, with a passion never before seen in human history and with a consecration new in the experience of men, the apostles did go forth to carry the glad news unto the uttermost parts of the earth. And they did so in the wisest and most states-

manlike manner. They were not labouring like men who imagined that their one task was to gather out of the mass of humanity a certain and fixed number of the elect with a view to completing that number so as to bring in the second coming of Christ and the destruction of the existing world order. They were evidently labouring to accomplish the salvation of mankind. Saint Paul struck out for the great centres of civilisation, the cities whence radiated influences which moulded the life of the empire. He organised churches. He visited them a second and a third time to establish them in the faith. He wrote letters to individuals, to single churches, and to groups of churches dealing not only with great theological doctrines but with the application of the principles of Christianity to the everyday and commonplace duties of life. Beyond a doubt, he was interested in the salvation of human society as well as in the salvation of individuals.

V

It is evident, then, that this is the Program of Jesus, the building of the Kingdom of God

here and now in human hearts and in human institutions. A change of hearts and a transformation of society by the spirit of Jesus is the goal toward which all Christian men should daily pray and labour. And nothing can be sadder at the present time, with civilisation threatened with collapse, with a recrudescence of paganism and its love of pleasure and passion for power, with the breakdown of moral ideals in private and family life, with selfishness on the throne in industrial affairs, with the relation of the white race to the coloured races of the world becoming more strained and critical every year, with international politics as yet not far removed from the primitive and barbarous stage of development —I say nothing can be sadder than to see well-intentioned but misguided people spending their leisure time poring over the apocalyptic writings of the Bible and talking continually of "seals" and "trumpets" and "bowls" and "beasts," while proclaiming their dogmatic pessimism from every housetop, and buttressing up their declaration of steadfast orthodoxy by their denial of faith in the power of the gospel of Christ to save the world.

As against all this, we dare believe in the Program of Jesus. And we recall with joy that his program is a "gospel" and not an announcement of doom to a world grown corrupt like Sodom and Gomorrah so that nothing but a rain of fire and brimstone from an angry God will suffice to cleanse the earth. We recall that Jesus announced a "gospel," and that this word means "good news"—good news about God, good news about man, good news about the Kingdom of God, good news about forgiveness, good news about human society. It will be remembered that Jesus, at the beginning of his ministry, went into the synagogue at Nazareth and announced his program in the language of the prophet, Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor,
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

Thus we understand the gospel. So we interpret the purpose of Christ in human society. In harmony with this do we construe our duty and privilege as twentieth-century Christians. This is what we have in mind when we pray:

> "Our Father who art in heaven
> Hallowed be thy name,
> Thy kingdom come,
> Thy will be done—
> On earth as it is in heaven."

"These things shall be! A loftier race
Than e'er the world hath known shall rise
With flame of freedom in their souls,
With light of science in their eyes.

"They shall be gentle, brave, and strong,
To spill no drop of blood, but dare
All that may plant man's lordship firm
On earth and fire, and sea, and air.

"Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.

"New arts shall bloom of loftier mould
And mightier music thrill the skies,
And every life shall be a song
When all the earth is paradise.

"These things—they are no dreams—shall be
For happier men when we are gone;
These golden days for them shall dawn,
Transcending aught we gaze upon."

Tennyson refers to "that one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves." Jesus speaks of "the consummation of the age," the grand climax toward which the progress of the Kingdom of God is tending. And Saint Paul, looking far down the ages, tells of a time when all things shall reach their ultimate goal: "And when all things shall have been subjected unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all." It is this view of a mighty purpose running through creation and the affairs of men that gives us the idea of history as distinguished from mere annals. There is a divine teleology in history. God's eternal purpose in Christ moves on to ultimate and glorious triumph. History culminates with a shout of victory:

"Hallelujah: for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigneth!"

Lecture III

What Jesus purposed doing seen in what he actually did

"Who went about doing good."
—*Acts* 10:38.

Lecture III

WHAT JESUS PURPOSED DOING SEEN IN WHAT HE ACTUALLY DID

I purpose in the present lecture to ask the question: *As a matter of fact, what did Jesus actually do?* We have no need to theorise about this. We have here in the Four Gospels the record of his Life, his Teachings, his Mighty Deeds, and his Death. What is the significance of it all? Surely if Jesus himself had any definite plan of action, if his life moved forward according to some great program, if his ministry was conducted in harmony with a conscious purpose, the way to find out what he purposed doing in the world is to go to the record of his life and see what he actually did.

There had been certain plausible programs presented to him at the outset of his career as temptations to turn aside from the highest and best. There was also an apocalyptic scheme that had taken hold of the pious imagi-

nation of his people. But, as we have seen, he rejected these temptations and undertook a work too spiritual, too real, and too great to be fitted into apocalyptic schemes.

What we are seeking to do now, is to rid ourselves as far as possible of all prepossessions—to free our minds of all previously formed opinions—and go to the Four Gospels for our reading and interpretation of the Work of Christ. I report what I have seen.

Mark gives us a "specimen day" in the life of Jesus. Read Mark 1: 21-37. Here we see him at work, doing what he came into the world to do:

> "And they go into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching: for he taught them as having authority and not as the scribes. And straightway there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Nazarene? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus re-

buked him, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him. And the unclean spirit, tearing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying, What is this? a new teaching! with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they obey him. And the report of him went out straightway everywhere into the region of Galilee round about.

"And straightway when they were come out of the synagogue, they came into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and straightway they tell him of her: and he came and took her by the hand, and raised her up; and the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

"And at even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with demons. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick with divers diseases, and cast out many demons; and he suffered not the demons to speak, because they knew him.

> "And in the morning, a great while before day, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. And Simon and they that were with him followed after him; and they found him, and say unto him, All are seeking thee."

In this one passage several things come out. Here are some of them: He was a marvellous teacher; there was such power and authority in his message as the Jews had never seen in any of their scribes. He had power over evil spirits to cast them out, and associating this with the power of his personality and power of his message, the people exclaimed: "What is this? A new teaching with authority!" Healing and casting out evil spirits constituted a large part of his work of ministering to people. Having ability to help and heal, his heart went out in sympathy and service to all that were distressed. But in the midst of it, his own soul called for peace and calm; and in the morning, a great while before day, he arose and went out into a desert place and there prayed. But he could not have his privacy long; they broke in upon him saying: "All men

are seeking thee." And in all his work there was a certain urgency. How often in the brief passage quoted, we read the word, "straightway." When one thing is done, "straightway" he does another thing. The human need and the divine urge would give him no rest!

One calls to mind a sentence used by Peter in the house of Cornelius: "He went about doing good." No one sentence so accurately sums up what Jesus did in the days of his flesh—"He went about doing good." Or as one might translate the words: "He passed through doing good." Swiftly he spent his life, without haste and without rest. And as he "passed through" the world, he was always "doing good." This little "cameo" that Mark gives us will help us all along in our study of the work of Jesus. It is a snapshot, if one may be pardoned the word, of our Lord busy at his work. It reveals his heart, his purpose, and his urgency.

Turning now to the story of his life as we have it in the Four Gospels, we ask: What was the purpose of Jesus' ministry as seen in what he actually did?

I

Jesus was a Teacher, the greatest Teacher of religion that the world ever saw.

How often is this word "Teacher" on the lips of those who address him. And his "disciples" are just "learners," for this is what the word means in the Greek Testament. Jesus is the "Master," the "Teacher"; and those who followed him were "disciples," "learners," students in the School of Jesus.

1. Look into the Four Gospels and see what large place and emphasis are given to Jesus as a Teacher.

Mark is the earliest of the Four. The Second Gospel bears every evidence of being the work of an eye-witness of the ministry of Jesus. There can be no doubt of the correctness of the tradition that Mark was Peter's "interpreter," and that he wrote down the things that he had heard Peter say about his Lord. Peter had been impressed with the mighty deeds of Jesus. In Mark, Jesus is the Doer of Mighty Works. Here Jesus is the "Strong Son of God." But even here the deeds of Jesus are recorded for the sake of what they

teach, and almost every page in Mark's Gospel contains teachings from the lips of the Master. Over and over again Jesus is referred to as "Master," "Teacher."

The Gospel according to Matthew presents Jesus as "the Christ who fulfils prophecy." But what a Teacher Jesus is in Matthew—in the Sermon on the Mount, in his instructions to his disciples touching their work, in his never-to-be-forgotten parables, and in his great discourses concerning Last Things!

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus is "the sympathizing Son of Man." But what a Teacher he is—in parables of exquisite tenderness like "the Good Samaritan" and "the Prodigal Son," and in others of divine severity like the story of "the Rich Fool" and that of "the Rich Man and Lazarus"!

In the Fourth Gospel, Jesus is "the Eternal Word of God Made Manifest in Human Flesh." And what a Teacher he is—as he talks with Nicodemus, as he tarries at Jacob's well and speaks with the Samaritan woman, and as he proclaims himself to be the "Bread of Life that came down from Heaven!" And what a Teacher he is seen to be when, with

John the beloved disciple, we enter the Holy of Holies, and hear those marvelous utterances contained in the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of the Gospel according to John! Truly here in the Four Gospels is one that spake as never man spake!

2. On one occasion Jesus made a surprising claim touching the value and abiding significance of his teachings. Said he: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The ancient prophets had written their words down, as did Isaiah and Jeremiah. Great philosophers, such as Plato, had been at utmost pains to write down what they wished to pass on to succeeding generations. But Jesus wrote nothing. He uttered his word in the ears of men dull of hearing and slow of heart to understand; and nevertheless he said: "My words shall not pass away." And they did not, and they will not. George Romanes calls attention to a matter that has not had sufficient attention:

> "It is the absence from the biography of Christ of any doctrines which the subsequent growth of human knowledge—whether in

natural science, ethics, political economy, or elsewhere—has had to discount. This negative argument is really almost as strong as the positive one, from what Christ did teach. For when we consider what a large number of sayings are recorded of—or at least attributed to him,—it becomes most remarkable that in literal truth there is no reason why any of his words should ever pass away in the sense of becoming obsolete. 'Not even now could it be easy,' says John Stuart Mill, 'even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Jesus would approve his life.' "

Romanes then goes on to contrast Jesus Christ in this particular with other thinkers of like antiquity. He instances Plato, living in Athens which represented an unequalled civilisation and intellectual culture, and following Socrates, that marvelous representative of human reason in the direction of spirituality. But even in Plato there are errors of all sorts "reaching even to absurdity in respect of reason, and to sayings shocking to the moral sense. Yet this

is confessedly the highest level of human reason on the lines of spirituality, when unaided by alleged revelation." [1]

3. Passing now from the negative to the positive aspect of the teachings of Jesus, what has he left unsaid that he should have said? Our curiosity would ask many questions. Our inquisitiveness calls for many things that are not given. But moral and religious truths are never given to satisfy intellectual curiosity. They are given to aid life. And what truth necessary to the highest moral and religious life did Jesus fail to give? His teachings had to do with four great themes—God, Man, Duty, Immortality. Or to use his own comprehensive phrase, he taught all the time about "the Kingdom of Heaven." He said: God is your Father; man is your brother; your duty is love to God and love to man; the future is filled with solemn issues for all, with rewards for the good and penalties for the wicked; therefore, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." Language, this, that may seem commonplace now—grown common

[1] "Thoughts on Religion," pp. 167-168.

through familiarity to the ear; but language which grows ever more and more significant when laid to heart and interpreted in terms of everyday living.

To a discussion of the teachings of Jesus we must return in the next Lecture. Meantime we say with another:

"Subtlest thought shall fail and learning falter,
Churches change, forms perish, systems go,
But our human needs, they will not alter,
Christ, no after age shall e'er outgrow.

"Yea, Amen! O changeless One, Thou only
Art life's guide and spiritual goal,
Thou the Light across the dark vale lonely,—
Thou the eternal haven of the soul."

II

Jesus revealed God to men as the Father.

This is not theory. It is a simple matter of fact. It is a fact that since Jesus came and lived and taught and worked and died, men can no more think of God without thinking in terms of Jesus than we can go out and look up at the stars without looking through the

all-embracing atmosphere. And Jesus knew that it was his mission in the world to reveal the Father.

For there can be no question about Jesus' being conscious of a special and unique relation to God. In a special way he claimed that God was his Father. In a unique sense he claimed to know God. This claim is seen in many acts and in many sayings, but nowhere so clearly as in that wonderful saying in the eleventh chapter of Matthew:

> "At that season Jesus answered and said: I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou didst hide these things from the wise and understanding, and didst reveal them unto babes: yea, Father, for so it was well pleasing in thy sight. All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart and

ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The weary and heavy laden whom Jesus calls to himself are those who are weary because they have sought the truth and missed it, those who are burdened because they have longed for God and have not been able to find him. Between Jesus and the Father there is perfect and unbroken fellowship, there is the intimacy of complete understanding. None ever knew the Father as the Son knows him. But all who come to Jesus and put their lives in moral accord with him, shall learn his secret and shall be introduced by him into a satisfying knowledge of God. All this, Jesus claimed to be able to do. And all this Jesus did. All this Jesus forever does. Those who come to Jesus find God as he is found nowhere else.

As reported in the Fourth Gospel, we find Jesus saying: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." And this is what actually takes place. *If men cannot see the Father in Jesus, then they can never see him at all.* And here I do not argue; I simply affirm. And if this is dogmatism, then make the most of it! I do

affirm that if one does not see God in Jesus, it is entirely useless to construct metaphysical arguments—ontological, cosmological, teleological—in an effort to discover him. I do affirm that if one does not see God in Jesus, it is utterly vain to go seeking for God in Nature in the hope of looking through Nature up to Nature's God. It is a manifest fact of history that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." Look and see! There he is! And God has so made man that he can recognise God when he sees him.

Here in Christ—in his life, in his acts of mercy, in his death, and in his glorious triumph over the grave—here God is seen as he cannot be seen in flower or star, or ocean or mountain, or in the earth, or in the heavens above. There at the wedding feast, there at the carrying out of the dead body of the widow's son, there with the baby nestling in his arms, there weeping tears of sympathy at the grave of a dead friend, there crying aloud over unrepentant and unresponsive Jerusalem, there with arms extended calling all the weary and heavy laden to himself, there dying on the cross—a robber on one side and a robber on

the other—while his very heart breaks with sorrow, the sympathising, agonising, sin-bearer of the human race—if one does not see God there, then one can never see him at all. I say, If God is not in Christ, God is nowhere. Or speaking positively, as I mean to speak: Jesus felt that he had such relation to God as none who ever lived; Jesus felt that it was his mission to reveal God; and as a matter of fact Jesus does reveal God. And—

"I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And hath so far advanced thee to be wise."

Christ gave many great and wonderful gifts to men; but the highest and the best is our best thoughts about God. Henceforth, the Christian's God is a Christlike God. And this is what is peculiar and distinctive in the Christian thought of God—Our God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Our God is like Jesus in character. And taking it all in all, looking at it from every possible viewpoint, this is the most significant and determinative thing Jesus did—he showed us God. *And he*

means our view of God to be all-controlling in thought and act and in the whole of life.

III

Jesus gave himself to a ministry of loving and self-sacrificing service.

Nothing was ever so real as the life of Jesus. No ministry was ever so genuine as was his ministry. He was touched with the feeling of human infirmity. He was moved with compassion toward all who wandered and went out of the way. He was filled with sorrow for all who were bowed down with pain. And so, to use Peter's picturesque sentence once more, "He went about doing good."

The Four Gospels are all full of stories of the marvelous deeds Jesus did. He cast out demons; he unstopped deaf ears; he loosened the stammering tongue; he gave sight to the blind; he healed men of loathsome leprosy; he gave strength to palsied hands; he called the dead back to life. Here is the record of the miraculous. What are we going to do with it? Are we going to take the view of eighteenth-century deism, that God is not

present, but absent; that he once did something, but can do nothing now? Or are we going to take the view of pantheism, that God is already so fully present in everything that he cannot manifest himself in any way but the way of the usual and the ordinary? Or are we going to take the position that our modern science has spoken the last word; so that, at any cost, religion and the story of Jesus must be made to fit into current scientific moulds? Is it the part of wisdom for religious teachers to strive always to adjust the religion of the New Testament to the theories of scientists? Would it not be wisest, without any *a priori* conclusions and without any foregone deductions, to ask, *What are the facts?* Would it not be more scientific to sit down before the facts as little children? For both in the world of science and in the world of faith, we must become as little children if we would enter the kingdom.

The position taken by Seeley seems the only position a well-balanced judgment can hold:

> "On the whole, miracles play so important a part in Christ's scheme that any theory which would represent them as due entirely

to the imagination of his followers or of a later age destroys the credibility of the documents not partially, but wholly, and leaves Christ a personage as mythical as Hercules." [2]

This conclusion is here quoted because it comes from one not within the pale of orthodox Christianity; and because, although written more than a generation ago, we can say with entire confidence that no more recent critical examination of the New Testament documents and no late discoveries of science have brought anything to light that suggests to the student a revision of this opinion.

Jesus, the world's supreme Teacher, the Man in whom we see God fully revealed, enters upon his ministry clothed with such powers as none other ever had. Those powers he uses only to serve mankind and to advance his Kingdom by performing deeds of mercy and loving kindness. In speaking of the miracles the Gospels use three words, "signs," "wonders," and "works." They were "signs" which manifested forth his glory and led his disciples to

[2] "Ecce Homo," p. 51.

see more fully into the nature and character of his mission in the world. They were "wonders" which caused all men to marvel and to say that they had never seen it on this fashion. And then they were "works." From the standpoint of Jesus they were just ordinary works. For extraordinary works are natural to the extraordinary man. They were the spontaneous outflow of the fulness that dwelt in him. We ordinary men do only ordinary things; unusual men do the unusual; extraordinary men do extraordinary things; Jesus did "works" in keeping with the character of the worker.

All that he was he put at the service of humanity. Wherever there was pain, he suffered. Wherever there was sorrow, he grieved. Wherever there was death, he was profoundly stirred as in the presence of an intruder that he had come to destroy. And this, too, he has taught us—*to put all that we have at the service of humanity.* He has sunk wells into the heart of humanity and brought up love and sympathy from hidden depths. And when he went about doing good, that was not a kind of *ad interim* performance. It was his method of bringing in the Kingdom. He

was actually doing his work as the World's Redeemer when he disclosed such wealth of human sympathy and of brotherly kindness. And this is the Program of Jesus for the building of the Kingdom of God in human lives and in human institutions. We must follow in his steps. Not by societies and organisations, not by adopting the methods of politics, and not by waiting for God to interpose miraculously and bring in a better day, does the Heavenly Kingdom come; but by loving as Jesus loved and working as he worked.

By an interesting coincidence, just as I had reached this point, there came into my hands a letter from one of my correspondents. She is a woman in frail health. On bad days she can only sit in a large chair or rest on her bed. On good days she is seldom able to go out, and sits in the warm sunlight enjoying her flowers. Her eyesight is so bad that she can read nothing but her large-lettered New Testament. Sometimes she occupies her active mind giving expression in simple verse to the emotions of her heart. Some of these verses she sends to me. In the letter which came to me just now she was telling me about one of

her friends. She writes as follows: "She is a wonderful woman. I have not known another like her. I am rich in having her as my friend. I don't know how I could have lived over some days without her. She reminds me of Christ walking about and doing his work in the flesh." And my correspondent enclosed the following lines addressed,

"To My Friend:

"I was weary and lone, and the hours seemed
long,
For the fight had been hard that day;
But a kindly word as you passed along,
Threw sunshine across my way.

"It's the common deeds that we deem so small,
That count in this world of strife—
A pleasant word or a friendly smile—
That make up the things of life.

"But it was not the word or the friendly deed,
That counted for most that day;
But the Christlike way of giving yourself
In all that you do or say."

There you have it. And as the illustration comes out of common everyday life, it all the

more forcibly brings home to our hearts the method of Jesus. What he felt, he means for us to feel. The way he loved, he means for us to love. The way he served, he means for us to serve. This is the Program of the Kingdom. This is the method of its advancement—"even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many."

We talk of places of "preferment." We speak of our "prerogatives" and our "privileges." *Christianity knows nothing of such terms.* They are all pagan—*preferment, prerogative, privilege—none of them has any place in the Program of Jesus.*

> "The great man is not the man who is independent of the world, but the man who bears the world in his heart and mind, and expresses it with peculiar vigor and truth. That is why Jesus was Perfect Man, and has set the standard of greatness for all time, because he bore the whole world in his heart, and expressed it in terms of perfect Truth and Beauty. . . . The old type of great man, high and lifted up, great through in-

dependence, the tyrant, the dominant oppressor, the conqueror, is degraded; we may fear him, grovel before him, we are cowards and often do, but in our hearts we do not respect him, for he is not respectable. Since Christ lived and died none but servants are respectable. You have to serve and suffer if you want to reign, henceforth all kings must be crowned with thorns, if they would be real kings." [3]

IV

In a word, Jesus adopted the principle of the cross as the guiding principle of his Program.

This comes to the very heart of the matter. This principle of vicarious self-sacrifice had been seen by the noble prophet who wrote the supreme things in Old Testament prophecy. Nothing ever written could be finer than this:

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But

[3] Studdart-Kennedy, "The Wicket Gate," pp. 143-144.

> he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we were healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

In no other that ever lived was this principle so embodied as in Jesus. From the very beginning the spirit of the cross was the spirit of his life. There is no evidence at all that at any time Jesus changed his plan of action. There is every reason to be sure that from the time he entered upon his ministry the shadow of the cross fell on him. In the Temptation on the Mount, he rejected the thought of "the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them," and chose instead the *via dolorosa* leading to the Garden of Gethsemane and Golgotha. It is a misreading of his entire outlook upon his life and work to say that in the beginning of his ministry he was looking for an early victory by the manifestation of miraculous powers which would change the universe and bring in an apocalyptic kingdom in spite

of the resistance of men; and that only later when he saw his hopes fading, did he turn toward the cross as the way to the crown. It is, I say, a misreading of the facts of his life in support of a preconceived theory.

From the very time that he took his station by the side of sinful men in the baptism of John at the Jordan, thus identifying himself the sinless one with man the sinful, did he recognise the cross as the way to the conquest of the world. At a turning point in his ministry he definitely laid down the law of the cross as the law of discipleship. Said he: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever would save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's shall save it." Somewhat later when his disciples, James and John, came to him asking to be made first in his kingdom, Jesus showed them the one and only road to true greatness in the Kingdom of God:

> "You know the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men overbear them: not so with you. Whoever wants to

be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave; just as the Son of man has not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many,"[4]

And later still, on the eve of the great betrayal and the tragedy of the cross, he took a towel, when no one else would, and girded himself and poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, teaching us for all time by his example that the highest dignity is in the lowliest service. It is this that Reginald Heber sings about in language that stirs our hearts:

"The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain:
His blood-red banner streams afar;
Who follows in his train?
Who best can drink his cup of woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in his train."

[4] The translation is Moffatt's.

Jesus took the way of dying that he might live forever in the hearts of men, and that men might so live as to conquer the world. Jesus had to die. The cross was necessary to the purpose of Jesus. He told his disciples once that "the Son of man *must*" go up to Jerusalem and suffer and die. There was a human necessity and a divine necessity, and a divine necessity no less than a human. For love must always dare the worst and do the most. And what a revelation we have on the cross of divine love doing all that love can do. Sin has never seemed the same since then. To all who look on Calvary, sin is seen to be hideous as hell itself. And holiness has never seemed just the same since then. To all whose hearts are open to the divine, holiness henceforth is not something separate and remote and sacrosanct, but something that enters into sympathy with sinful men and gets under their burdens and carries them and bears them away.

It is a tragedy in the history of religion that the cross of Christ has been made a theory in theology to dispute over, rather than a passionate principle of life to be lived out in service. And it is a strange inversion of the prin-

ciple of Calvary that the bloody, agonising cross has been fashioned into an ornament and worn as a watch-charm or hung about the neck of light-hearted beauty. And yet, when one comes to think of it, that is not so strange after all—this transfiguration of the cross from an instrument and symbol of torture to an image of beauty and a symbol of grace. Here is seen the mystery of redemption! The cross works miracles! And only the mystery of the cross can work the miracle of salvation for sinful and suffering humanity.

And how singular that the sacrament of the Lord's Supper should have been so misunderstood and so perverted. Jesus broke the bread and poured out the wine and gave to his disciples that they might see symbolised and set forth there the principle of self-sacrifice as central in the life and worship of his Church. And, lo! after a time men came to think that a magic power lay in the very elements of bread and wine to work mysteriously in the souls of men. The broken bread represents the broken body of Jesus—and the broken body of his servants, I will dare to say. The wine poured out represents the life of Jesus poured

out for the salvation of the race—and the lives of all his servants, I will also dare to say, poured out in sacrificial love.

It was when Sir Launfal at length had taken compassion on the miserable leper, and had "parted in twain his single crust" and "broke the ice on the streamlet's brink, and gave the leper to eat and drink," that a light shone round the place, and the leper stood glorified before him, while the voice of Jesus "calmer than silence said":

"Lo, it is I, be not afraid!
In many climes without avail,
Thou hast spent thy life for the Holy Grail;
Behold, it is here,—this cup which thou
Didst fill at the streamlet for me just now;
This crust is my body broken for thee,
The water His blood that died on the tree;
The holy supper is kept, indeed,
In whatso we share with another's need;
Not that which we give, but what we share,
For the gift without the giver is bare;
Who bestows himself with his alms feeds three,—
Himself, his hungering neighbor, and Me."

It cuts athwart our human nature; it runs counter to our inborn selfishness. But we are

not Christians until we take up Christ's cross and follow him. We are not his disciples until we enthrone the cross in our hearts. The method of Jesus is the way of the cross. The Program of the Kingdom is the principle of service. Still Jesus calls, as at the beginning: "Come, follow me!"

V

The last thing I wish at this time to mention is that Jesus organised a society to carry on his work in the world.

I recognise at once the possibility of misunderstanding just what I have in mind. The word "society" may lead us astray; and the word, "organise" may carry along with it connotations which do not properly indicate what I mean.

But Jesus did call twelve of his disciples to him and make them apostles. At first they had simply been friends of his who liked to be with him and listen to his words, just like scores of others who were disciples of the Lord. But there came a time when he felt that certain of them should be more intimately associated with

him. And so he called them away from their trades, the fishermen were to leave their nets and the publican was to leave his tax-gathering, and now spend all their time with Jesus. This was necessary that they might come to see the majesty and divinity of his personality; that he might more intimately instruct them speaking in ears ready to hear and understand words that could not be spoken in public; that he might send them forth to teach and to do works of kindness and love; and that, when he should leave them, they might be prepared to take up his work and carry it on in the world.

The word, "Church," carries along with it so many notions which have come to be connected with it in the long history of Christianity, thoughts of "organisation" and "orders" and "sacraments," that we may find it difficult to get back to the New Testament idea of the Church. Nevertheless, the idea is there. As recorded in Matthew, when Peter had made the great confession, Jesus said: "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;

and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." I am not overlooking the fact that the word, "Church," is found only twice in the Four Gospels, while in the Epistles the thought of the Kingdom seems to take secondary place, and the idea of the Church to be everywhere prominent. However, I think there are very evident reasons for this. One is, that the phrase, "the Kingdom of God" was at home among the Jews; it was in their Old Testament Scriptures; they had been long familiar with that form of language; and Jesus used the language of his time and his people. The gentiles had no such conception; they did have, all over the Greek world, the word, "church"—*ecclesia*. The apostles took up that word and poured into it the thought of Jesus. "The apostles," as James Denney says, "do not quote Christ; they live in him and reproduce his mind in living ways." And there is yet another reason why the apostles give less prominence to the phrase, "the Kingdom of God" and more prominence to the idea of the "Church." Jesus, in the days of his flesh, carried "the Kingdom" about with him

—wherever he was, there was the Kingdom. With him the Kingdom was a spiritual reality in a sense that even the apostles could not fully realise. It was natural therefore for him to think more about the spiritual reality, and it was equally natural for the apostles to think more about the outward organisation.

That Jesus took over the rite of baptism from Judaism seems certain. Those who became Christians were to be baptised in his name. By his authority we have continued to make disciples, "baptising them and teaching them." Also, Jesus did break the bread and pour out the wine in the Last Supper with his disciples, and bid them "do this in remembrance of me." *The social significance of these two rites has not been duly appreciated. In public baptism, the convert separated himself from the life he had been living and identified himself with the followers of Jesus. In breaking the common loaf and in drinking from one common cup, while they kept always in mind the death and passion of Jesus, they continually cemented anew the solemn vow and covenant they had made to be brothers each to the other.*

And the bond that united them was the love

of Christ. Said Saint Paul: "The love of Christ constraineth us." As another has said: "Christ gathered all men into a common relation to himself, demanded that each should set him on the pedestal of his heart, giving a lower place to all other objects of his worship, to father and mother, to husband and wife. In him should the loyalty of all hearts centre; he should be their pattern, their authority, and judge. Of him and his service should no man be ashamed, but to those who acknowledge it his morality should be an easy yoke, and the law of right as spontaneous as the law of life; sufferings should be easy to bear, and the loss of worldly friends repaired by a new home in the bosom of the Christian kingdom; finally in death itself their sleep should be sweet upon whose tombstone it could be written, *'Obdormivit in Christo.'*" [5]

The Kingdom of God, it should be said with emphasis, is vastly bigger and greater than any Church and than all Churches. Augustine went sadly astray when he identified the City of God with the Church as he knew it. The words may, indeed, in the New Testament

[5] "Ecce Homo," pp. 113-114.

be used sometimes to cover the same thought; but the New Testament idea of the Church must not be overlaid with ecclesiastical notions that find no place in the teachings of Jesus and the apostles. The more nearly our thought of the Church approaches the idea contained in the phrase, "the Kingdom of God," the nearer shall we come to truth and reality.

As matters now stand, the "Kingdom" is far greater and far more spiritual than the "Church." The Kingdom is made up of all men and women and little children in all lands, who have the mind of Jesus and are seeking to do his will; and the work of the Kingdom is the business of bringing individuals of all classes to loyalty to Jesus, and bringing all human institutions under his power. To accomplish this identical end, Jesus organised that Christian society which we call the Church. The Church becomes more and more Christian as it more and more nearly approximates the Christian conception of the Kingdom of God.

To carry out the will of Christ on earth, namely, to bring in the Kingdom of God among men—this is the Program of the Church.

Let us sum up in order the line of thought which we have sought to develop in the present lecture. We went to the Four Gospels to see what Jesus actually did during the days of his ministry. We sought to discover Christ's Program for human society by making a study of what "Jesus began to do and to teach." We found that Jesus taught continually, in public and in private. We saw that Jesus was and remains the world's greatest teacher of ethics and religion. We found, also, that Jesus did reveal the Father, that as he went about doing good the conviction grew on those who knew him most intimately that they had actually seen God manifest in human flesh. It was borne in upon us that Jesus did not occupy any distant and official relation to men; he was bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. What he did he did because he loved us and had become one of us. His work in the world was seen to be actual, vital, real. And all through his life ran the principle of the cross. He died on the cross, because the cross was the rule of his life. Thus, while revealing the suffering and sin-bearing love of God, he also revealed the law of discipleship, the law of suffering love.

And that his work might be carried on in the world, he called men to him and breathed into them new life. The change that took place in them grew out of his love for them and their love for him, and it remains the greatest of all his miracles, the creation of Christlike disciples out of the ordinary men that followed him. He organised his society that men might continue to live as he lived and work as he worked, so that the Kingdom of God might come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This beginning of his Program did Jesus make in the days of his flesh. To us men of to-day has he committed the carrying out of that Program.

If we fail, he fails. And he shall not fail.

Lecture IV

JESUS NOT A LAWGIVER BUT A TEACHER

"Never man so spake."
—*John* 7:46.

Lecture IV

JESUS NOT A LAWGIVER BUT A TEACHER

The Hebrew Bible is arranged under three main divisions, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings—the third division being frequently spoken of as the Psalms, the most highly valued book in that collection. The Law included what we call the Pentateuch—the Five Books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

While Judaism, in the time of Christ, continued to value highly the Prophets and the other Writings, the Book of the Law had come to take the first, the supreme place, in the moral and religious life of the people. The value they attached to the Law is seen in Saint Paul's searching words:

> "Thou bearest the name of a Jew, and restest upon the law, and gloriest in God, and knowest his will, and approvest the

things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, and art confident that thou art a guide to the blind, a light to them that are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having in the law the form of knowledge and of the truth."

And by "the Law" they had come to mean much more than the law of Moses—they had come to mean the traditional interpretation of that law. This interpretation dealt with all the details of life. As Geikie puts it:

"Not only was that part of the law which concerns the common life of the people—their Sabbath, feast days, jubilees, offerings, sacrifices, tithes, the temple and synagogue worship, civil and criminal law, marriage, and the like—explained, commented on, and minutely ordered by the rabbis, but also that portion of it which related only to the private duties of individuals in their daily religious life. Their food, their clothes, their journeys, their occupations: indeed, every act of their lives, and almost their every thought were brought under rabbinical rules. To perpetuate the law, a 'hedge' of outlying

commands was set round it, which in Christ's day had become so 'heavy and grievous a burden' that even the Talmud denounces it as a vexatious oppression."

Out of this system of legalism and traditionalism, some of the worst sort of evils came:

1. The law itself was almost deified. Men worshipped the Book rather than the God who had inspired the writers of it. More and more God disappeared into the past, and was no longer seen in the present. Thus Jesus said to the Jews: "Ye search the Scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life." They put the Scriptures in the place of God.

2. They identified morality with obedience to written law. A man was good who knew the law and kept it; a man was bad who was ignorant of the law and did not observe it. Not to know the law was to be accursed.

3. Morality and religion became little more than external affairs. For a law can deal only with overt actions. There were, of course, noble spirits among the Jews, like young Saul of Tarsus, who could not rest permanently in nothing more than outward obedience. But

the legal conception of righteousness generally prevailed.

4. One of the worst consequences of Jewish legalism was the inevitable "tendency to fall back upon national privilege as a substitute for real reformation." The Jews felt perfectly safe when they said, "We have Abraham to our father." They carried the doctrine of election to its logical conclusion. God had chosen Israel, and all Israelites, except very exceptional and determined sinners, were believed to have their share in all the promises of God.[1]

5. An inevitable outcome of it all was the prevalence of hypocrisy. The apostle Paul, in a series of questions, goes to the heart of the matter with a rapier thrust:

> "Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? thou that gloriest in the law, through thy transgression of the

[1] See Sanday, "Outline of the Life of Christ," pp. 13-17

law dishonorest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you."

Now, the Jews did not expect their Messiah to be a *Teacher;* they fully expected him to be a *Lawgiver.* They never dreamed that he would run counter to their scientific system of legalism; they thought that he would be a new and greater Moses. They took it for granted that he would recognise their whole legal system as being sacred and divine and inviolable, that he would amplify it and still further glorify it.

But Jesus was not a Lawgiver; he was a Teacher. And, as such, he cast aside, and threw off, their entire system of rabbinical accretions. He did indeed point out every principle of abiding worth underlying their law, and develop it. But in his life and in his teachings he completely and forever transcended the whole legalistic system. You cannot associate the name of Jesus with the lawgivers—for he was in no sense a lawgiver. You cannot mention him along with the scribes and Pharisees —for he had no sympathy with their spirit and

method. You may mention him in connection with the "wise men" of Israel, but none of them can be named as being in a class with him. You may very properly say that the best that was in the greatest of the Old Testament prophets came to complete expression in him. But Jesus stands alone. As another has beautifully put it:

> "He unites in himself the sublimest precepts and divinest practices, thus more than realising the dream of prophets and sages; rises free from all prejudices of his age, nation, or sect; gives free range to the Spirit of God in his breast; sets aside the law sacred and true—honoured as it was, its forms, its sacrifice, its temple, its priests; puts away the doctors of the law, subtle, irrefragable, and pours out a doctrine beautiful as the light, sublime as Heaven, and true as God."

I

How Jesus completely transcends the law is seen clearly in his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount.

Jesus shocked the rabbis. They still had wit enough to know that what he was doing and saying blasted at the very foundation of legalism. They jumped at once to the conclusion, to them inevitable, that his purpose was to destroy the law and the prophets. But Jesus said: "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil." That word, "fulfil," must be understood. It is a pregnant word; it is full of meaning. Turn round the component parts of that word, "full" and "fill," and you will have the exact meaning of the word as it stands in the Greek New Testament. Jesus came not to destroy anything that was good in Judaism; neither did he come to destroy anything that was good in the Old Testament Scriptures. He came to *fill full.* There were eternal principles in the Hebrew Bible; there were precious truths in Jewish teaching. They were not yet in full flower; they were in germ or in imperfect development. Jesus came to fill them full. He came to "fulfil" as the blossom fulfils the bud, as the fruit fulfils the flower. He came to fulfil as the day fulfils the dawn. He did not come to turn *out* the light shining in the Jewish

Scriptures, he came to turn it *up,* so that it might give light to all that are in the household of humanity everywhere.

1. There stood the law, "Thou shalt not kill." With the Jews, murder was in the outward act—the blow that struck a man down. With Jesus, murder is in the heart—in secret anger, in settled contempt. Jesus traces murder to its origin, and puts a stop to it there.

2. There was the law, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The rabbis held that adultery was in the act. Jesus says that adultery is in the lustful look and the lascivious heart. The heart is the sinner. In the heart is adultery committed. Then Jesus goes on to exhort that purity is so priceless a jewel that it ought to be purchased at any cost—if necessary by plucking out the right eye or cutting off the right hand. Nothing, according to Jesus, is of so much value as the clean heart. But the rabbis held that the important thing about divorce was to see that the legal papers were in due and proper form—"Let him give her a writing of divorcement." Jesus said that the important thing is to recognise the everlasting sanctity of the marriage relation.

3. And there was the law, "Thou shalt not forswear thyself." And if a man used the name of God in swearing, he was bound by his oath. But if a man swore only an ordinary oath, like "By the earth," or "By Jerusalem," or "By my head,"—that was just an oath of convenience. He might falsify as much as he pleased, if he did not use the name of God in swearing. But Jesus said that an oath was entirely unnecessary and superfluous. Tell the truth and that is sufficient.

4. Also the law had said: "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." That was a good law for a primitive age when natural impulse insisted on two eyes for one eye, and dire punishment upon the man who knocked out another's tooth. But Jesus said: "Do not resist the evil man." Do good instead of evil. Repay unkindness with kindness. And for hatred, give love in return.

5. Once more, the law had declared, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour," the interpreters of the law had added, "And hate thine enemy." Jesus said: Hate nobody; love everybody. "Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your

Father who is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them that love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the Gentiles the same? Ye therefore shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Thus did Jesus completely transcend the law, by completely fulfilling it. Thus did he liberate morality and religion from bondage to literalism and traditionalism, by breathing into them his own lifegiving spirit—the spirit of love and devotion and service.

Now, externality, legalism, and literalism are not just the vices of ancient Judaism; they are vices which seem forever attendant upon religion everywhere. And certainly they are vices present in the life of the Church to-day. Our interest in such matters is not merely historical; it is related to the present and has to do with the lives of professed Christians living in our very midst. For it is always so much easier and so much more popular to have a form of godliness than to manifest the power

of it. It is so much easier to yield assent to a code of laws than to be governed always by the highest moral and religious principles. It is so much easier to hold to a form of sound words than it is to be held fast in the grip of the highest ethical principles. In the Acts of the Apostles, Christianity is again and again spoken of as a Way of Life. In those first days of the Church, Christians were called the people of the Way. But ever and anon in the history of Christianity we see professed followers of Jesus turning the Way of Life into a System of Dogmatics—and measuring a man's fidelity to the gospel, not by the beauty and Christlikeness of his life, but by the soundness of his metaphysical theories and the accuracy of his intellectual statements of the things that must be believed.

We need a rediscovery of Jesus.

Men seem to have forgotten that Jesus was a teacher—the greatest that the world ever saw. It seems important then, and indeed necessary that once more some one should stop and call attention to this fact.

Good men and great have often taught and written as if the one and only purpose of the

coming of Christ was that he might die on the cross, the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. The view seems to be held that the total work of redemption was accomplished on Calvary. Recall the view already mentioned that nothing can be spoken of as Christianity that was taught or done before the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ! The cross is indeed central in Christianity. It is the diamond pivot about which everything else in the gospel revolves—if I may borrow a figure of speech. It is the burning point in the life and ministry of Jesus—all his wonderful words, all his mighty works, all his self-sacrificing life, come to a burning focus here in the cross. "All the light of sacred story gathers round its head sublime." But this need not blind us to the no less obvious fact, namely, that Jesus was the world's greatest teacher of ethics. We have in the New Testament not only the theological interpretation of the Person of Christ and the witness of Christian experience to the wonderful fact of the Atonement; we have also the moral instructions springing out of that theology—and faith without works is dead. We have in the

Four Gospels the story of the last week in the earthly life of the Son of Man. We have there the detailed account of his death on the cross. But these same Four Gospels give large attention to what Jesus taught—taught in his life and acts, and taught by his wonderful words.

"Teacher"—this is the title by which he is most often addressed. How often in our Authorised Version we read of men addressing him as "Master." Now this word, "Master," is in the Greek Testament, *didaskalos,* which always means teacher. And the word, "disciple" is in the Greek, *mathetes,* which means a learner. Christians are just "learners" in the School of Christ. How much we have lost by overlooking this fact! The death of Christ is supremely redemptive. But the teachings of Jesus are themselves of redemptive value. The words of the Master have in them the power of redemption. The very principle of the cross is in them. What would the death of Jesus on the cross have meant to the world without the teachings of Jesus? It would not be easy to answer that question. What would the atoning sacrifice have done for the world unless along with the story of

that mighty deed there had gone the teachings of him who died on the cross? The grand purpose of the cross is to bring man back to God; and man is brought back to God that in fellowship with Christ he may live like Jesus. The final end and aim of the gospel is to make good men and good women. Christianity is an ethical religion. It matters not how faithful to ancient tradition a man's confession of faith may be; it matters little how like the conversion of Saul, or of Augustine, or of Wesley one's Christian experience may be—if his moral life does not exemplify the teachings of Jesus —if his spirit is not the spirit of Christ—if the power of the cross has not made him a new man in Christ. If not, then *cross* and *creed* and *experience* have all been in vain. But so one-sided has been the emphasis, so insistent have many Christians been on the theoretical rather than the practical, that we find a recent writer saying: "It is altogether too rashly assumed by people whose sentimentality outruns their knowledge, that Christianity is essentially an attempt to carry out the personal teachings of Jesus. It is nothing of the sort, and no Church authority will support that idea.

Christianity was and is a theological religion." *Per contra:* it is here affirmed that Christianity is essentially an ethical religion. Christianity is an attempt to carry out the teachings of Jesus in reference to all matters of life and duty. We do not discount the value of theology. The man who speaks contemptuously of theology only advertises his inability or his unwillingness to think deeply touching the fundamental problems of existence. But we are interested in theology because it bears on life—and only as it relates to life. And the emphasis is here and now laid on the moral and practical side of the Christian system because nothing is more needed nowadays than that Christians should begin in real earnest to practise their religion, and because the ultimate and final proof of the divineness of our holy religion is not going to be found in the realm of philosophy. For only a few men are philosophers. The final apologetic for Christianity is going to be in its applicability to the social, the economic, the interracial, and international problems of the world we live in. The Program of Jesus will turn out to be the best and final Christian apologetic.

It is interesting to find a historian and scholar like Simkhovitch writing: "Use all your modern little scientific standards, and you cannot get away from the fact that Christ's insight was one which future generations may rediscover but can never upset." He is exactly right: the teachings of Jesus are seen to be axiomatic. They can never be upset. It is for us to seek to rediscover them. And they are being rediscovered in our day. Hence a considerable amount of unrest, and even fright in some quarters. For the teachings of Jesus constitute a challenge that many Church members are entirely unwilling to accept. Indeed, Christ's program for their lives is entirely too upsetting; it is a stumbling block to them. They are perfectly willing to accept a Christ who saves the "soul" as something separate and apart from their daily living and as that part of them which must last through eternity. But when they are informed that the "soul" means the "life," and that there is no such thing as saving the "soul" apart from a man's daily relation to his money and his business and his associates and his employees and his pleasures, they take fright at once. And they

may well do so; for when once a man has made up his mind to be a Christian, a tremendous revolution is going to take place in his whole conduct—as an individual and as a member of human society. In this connection it is illuminating to read Ellwood's book, "The Reconstruction of Religion," and note how after he has made a careful study of Family Life, and Economic Life, and Political Life, and Social Pleasure; and, as a scientific sociologist, has sought to discover the one basis of stability and the one secret of salvation, he does nothing more nor less, in every case, than to rediscover Jesus and restate the principles of the Christian gospel.

I have said that Jesus was not a Lawgiver, but a Teacher. The distinction needs to be insisted upon and made yet clearer. The lawgiver sets down a system of rules. All one had to do was to look up the rule and make application to any particular instance. "All one had to do," did I say? Well, that made life mechanical, formal, outward, and in the end hypocritical. Jesus as a Teacher inculcated great principles, enunciated eternal truths; and then breathed into his followers his own spirit.

The teachings of Jesus do not make a big book. How fortunate we are in that. We wonder sometimes why he did not say more. We long for other words from the lips of the Master. But why should he have said more, since he has said all? The eternal and all-controlling principles of human conduct are not many, but few. If Jesus had gone into detail, we should have been in confusion. But along broad and essential lines he has moved, and all who wish to do God's will can follow him. "In Christ, in his teachings, his ministry, entirely apart from any of his other functions or qualities, the one thing that stands out monumentally is his intellectual grandeur, and the purity and unswerving consistency of its straight lines. . . . All the ideas of Jesus are correlated; they were closely fitted parts of one great intellectual concept, and all of the same spirit." [2]

Just a few great revealing truths, just a few great transforming principles are given; and when a man has these, he has everything. In Christ's light, we have light. Like a sunburst, his proclamation comes to us: "I am the light

[2] "Toward the Understanding of Jesus," pp. 73-74.

of the world. He that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." As the polestar guides the mariner, as the sun in the sky gives light to the traveller and the toiler, so do the teachings of Jesus guide us, so do they illumine all our way. He is the fountain light of all our day; the master light of all our seeing.

II

Let us endeavour now in a general and comprehensive way to pass under review the main outline of the teachings of Jesus. Adolf Harnack generalises under three main divisions:

"Firstly, the kingdom of God and its coming.

"Secondly, God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul.

"Thirdly, the higher righteousness and the commandment to love."

We must add to this, if we would be faithful to the Master, a fourth division, namely:

Christ himself in relation to the Kingdom and in relation to all who are seeking the higher righteousness of the Kingdom.

1. *Let it be noted once more that the teach-*

ings of Jesus had to do primarily with the Kingdom of God.

That was his chief concern. All his teachings relate to the Kingdom. What he had to say about God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul; what he taught about righteousness and the commandment to love; as well as what he said about himself and the demand he made on all his disciples that loyalty and devotion to him be made supreme and all-controlling—all related to the Kingdom he had come to inaugurate and establish among men.

> "The Sovereignty of God, his realm or reign, was the centre of the teachings, the new interpretation and revelation of that time-honoured phrase to which such different hopes clung throughout the nation. Jesus revealed it, not by any definition, but by the revelation of his own personality as the leader of the kingdom under God. The instructions he gave were not casual flashes of spiritual intuition, but related organically to this divine order of forgiveness and fellowship whose consummation he eagerly ex-

pected. He was inspired by God to introduce this new constitution of religion, and had authority to set aside any regulations or traditions which conflicted with its principles." [3]

2. *Recall what Jesus had to say about God the Father and the infinite value of the human soul.*

(a) Jesus brought God near to men. The God and Father of Jesus was not a distant God, but a God near at hand. He was not the God of the past only; he was the God of the present also. "My Father worketh even until now," said Jesus. "Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father." "God makes his sun to rise on the just and the unjust." Ever present in all the ongoing processes of Nature is the Living God, the Father of men. The psalmist said of the god-fearing man:

"He shall not be afraid of evil tidings:
His heart is fixed, trusting in Jehovah."

This faith of the psalmist is mightily confirmed and strengthened in the teachings and by the

[3] Moffatt, "Everyman's Life of Jesus," p. 85.

example of Jesus. This doctrine of a Father's constant care may seem strangely out of place in an age which sees Law everywhere and God nowhere, which prates about the reign of Law as if Law were some second and higher God. But Harnack is right: "The all-important element in this religion is the consciousness of being safe in God" and "the man who can say, 'My Father' to the Being who rules heaven and earth, is thereby raised above heaven and earth, and himself has a value higher than all the fabric of this world."

(b) And the Heavenly Father loves all his children—the younger son who takes his journey into the "far country" no less than the elder brother who remains at home confident in his smug self-righteousness. This same attitude Jesus shows in his treatment of the sinful woman at Jacob's well and in his gracious kindness toward the fallen woman who wept her tears of penitence at his feet in the Pharisee's house.

(c) And what a dignity does man come to in the teachings of Jesus! One day Jesus gave utterance to a saying that was tremendously upsetting; and if we fully believed all that is

implied in that saying, it would be revolutionary in our day. The Jewish religion had become an institution which was an end in itself. To the preservation of that institution the Jew had dedicated himself. The Sabbath, by way of illustration, was, in any event and at any cost, to be kept holy. God had raised up the Jews specially to observe and keep sacred that Seventh Day of the Week. Jesus shocked his contemporaries by doing good on the Sabbath and then shocked them again by saying: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." Man is an end in himself; he is never to be treated as a means to an end. The Sabbath is worth-while only as it serves man. Man is God's chief concern on this earth. And so with every other institution and law and custom—they are made for man. So does Jesus teach the infinite value of the human soul.

And there is that memorable saying, standing thus in our Authorised Version, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" The whole world is worth nothing except as it is of value to the soul. Mere things are only trash. Spiritual values are supreme.

(d) And what a day that was in the history of humanity when Jesus took the little children up in his arms and said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God!" How revolutionary that saying of Jesus about value of children to God: "In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father." That is to say, little children are dear to God—the providential care of the Father is over these little ones.

(e) Furthermore, the love of the Father goes out to all nations and all peoples. The narrow walls of Jewish provincialism and exclusiveness are broken completely down. The Kingdom of Heaven knows no frontiers. "I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and the west and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." His gospel is for the whole world.

3. *And keep constantly in mind what Jesus had to say about the higher righteousness and the commandment to love.*

(a) Said Jesus: "I say unto you that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteous-

ness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." Christian righteousness must be an inner righteousness, having its seat within, in the heart of men. "Out of the heart" every good thing comes, as well as every evil thing. Temple, sacrifices, ritual are worth while if they bring the soul to God—and only so. Genuine worship must be in spirit and in truth.

(b) Quite remarkable is the place that Jesus gives in his teachings to the duty of forgiveness. I know of nothing like it in the teachings of any other. And I think that as yet none of us has given sufficient attention to this feature of the teachings of Jesus. This emphasis on the importance of forgiveness is indeed quite surprising. It is clearly a new advance in religion. See how Jesus insists on it over and over again. In that great and comprehensive prayer which he taught his disciples, the Prayer for the Coming of the Kingdom, he enjoins this duty: "When ye pray say, Our Father . . . Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us." Peter was astonished when Jesus exhorted him to

forgive his offending brother not "seven times," but "until seventy times seven." Again Jesus said: "When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have aught against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive your trespasses." And there is more than one reason for this central place given to the duty of forgiveness. A Christian heart cannot be an unforgiving heart. All sweet and tender sentiments shrivel up and die in the unforgiving heart. Hate burns and blasts like a breath out of a furnace. *Furthermore, there is redemptive power in forgiveness.* Character withers under suspicion. Trust and confidence and forgiveness awaken all the best that sleep in human nature. For Jesus taught the redeemability of lost men. His confidence in the possibility of human recovery and salvation is simply amazing—nay, it is inspiring. Take, by way of illustration, that remarkable saying as given in Luke's Gospel: "But love your enemies, and do them good, and lend, never despairing: and ye shall be sons of the Most High." "Never despairing!" Note that. Trusting men to the limit, always believing that good possibilities lie in the worst!

"If some beings are abject and contemptible, if it be incredible to us that they can have any high dignity or destiny, do we regard them from so great a height as Christ? Are we likely to be more pained by their faults and deficiencies than he was? Is our standard higher than his? And yet he associated by preference with the meanest of the race: no contempt of them did he ever express, no suspicion that they might be less dear than the best to the common Father, no doubt that they were naturally capable of rising to a moral elevation like his own. There is nothing that a man may be prouder of than this; it is the most hopeful and redeeming fact in history; it is precisely what was wanting to raise the love of man as man to enthusiasm. An eternal glory has been shed upon the human race by the love Christ bore to it." [4]

This gracious and revolutionary teaching lies at the very heart of the gospel. In simple and appealing language it finds expression in Fanny Crosby's hymn:

[4] "Ecce Homo," pp. 178-179.

"Down in the human heart,
Crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore:
Touched by a loving heart,
Wakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more."

4. *And we shall not do justice to any review of the teachings of Jesus, no matter how brief and superficial that review may be, unless we mention and stress the fact that Jesus put himself in the centre of his message. There can be no Christianity without Christ himself.*

We give only a few outstanding passages.

In the Synoptics, we see this emphasis no less than in the Fourth Gospel. The great saying, mentioned in the last lecture, needs to be referred to once more: "No one knoweth the Son save the Father: neither doth any know the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son willeth to reveal him. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

No human being had ever said anything like that. No mere man would think of saying that. But Jesus knows that he can give what

a weary and heavy laden world needs, such knowledge of the Father as will give rest to the soul. There can be no higher claim than that. Therefore, whosoever would be a teacher of Christianity must put Christ in the centre of his gospel.

Again we find Jesus saying: "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me." Jesus claims for himself our best and highest love. We must enthrone him in our hearts above all human objects of affection.

Referring briefly to the Gospel according to John, we find there Jesus' "Sevenfold 'I Am.'" "I am the Bread of Life"; "I am the Light of the World"; "I am the Door"; "I am the Good Shepherd"; "I am the Resurrection and the Life"; "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life"; "I am the Vine, ye are the branches."

Beyond any shadow of doubt, Christ offers himself as the Saviour of men. Beyond any shadow of doubt, Christ did become the Saviour of his disciples. *And through all the*

Christian centuries the very nerve and heart of the Christian religion has been personal devotion to Jesus. So much so, that it would not be going too far to say that the motive power of our religion is devotion to Jesus.

And this is precisely what was needed to make Christianity more than a system of ethics —to make it a religion. Only an uplifting and transforming enthusiasm can make possible the carrying out into daily life of the teachings of Jesus. That requires something more than faith in the amazing possibilities that lie in human nature. That requires more than devotion to abstract principles and to lofty ethics, no matter how beautiful and appealing. It requires nothing less than enthusiasm for a person. And only as one comes to Jesus and loves him, only as one finds in him rest from his doubts and deliverance from his sins and sorrows, only as Christ breathes into him his own spirit, does life in harmony with the high moral teachings of the Master become possible.

III

I am quite sure that we have not fully appreciated the place and importance of teaching in the ministry of Jesus.

Take the two great branches of the Christian Church—Catholicism and Protestantism. In Catholicism there has been too much dependence on ritual and reliance on sacraments. So much so that in certain Roman Catholic countries, as in Mexico and South America, that Church has almost ceased to be a teaching Church. On the other hand, in our Protestant Churches where we have very properly made revivalism our great aggressive method of evangelism, the revival has been chiefly an appeal to the emotions and to the will. And so it has come about that there has been a woeful lack of instruction in the ethical principles of the Bible and sometimes almost a total lack of teaching centering around what Jesus *was* and *said* and *did*.

And this, our failure to be true to Jesus Christ, has brought many evil consequences in its train. Not the least of these is a theology in which the least attention is given to the Ex-

ample and Teaching of Jesus, and the largest stress is laid on the acceptance of a scheme of doctrine that can be written down on a card and carried in the pocket—a pocket rule by which to measure the orthodoxy of all who differ from one in theology. What is needed above anything else just now is a return to the method of Jesus.

As a matter of fact, Jesus spent nearly all his time teaching. Teaching was his constant business. Read the Four Gospels and see. He went up and sat on the mountain side and taught the multitudes. He sat in Simon's boat near the seashore and taught the crowds that pushed down to the water's edge. He took long walks with his disciples and taught them. He sat at the table as an invited guest and taught those who were at meat with him. He walked in the temple courts and spoke to the assembled people there. He was always looking for an opportunity to teach. With the single individual how patiently he laboured, as with Nicodemus and the woman at the well. With the twelve disciples how carefully he explained the things that he had said in public, kindly chiding them for their slowness to un-

derstand the deep things of the Kingdom. With what compassion he was moved toward the multitude, scattered and driven about like sheep without a shepherd—needing some one to guide them and feed them.

The attention Jesus gave to teaching his own disciples was a new thing. Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and the rest were all great prophets; but they did not gather about them a band of disciples and labour day and night in teaching them. No prophet ever trained disciples as Jesus did. Jesus wrote no book. We know of his stooping down once and writing on the ground. But Jesus wrote on human hearts. His disciples became books—"living epistles," to use Paul's phrase. If one wishes to realise how the teaching and influence of Jesus transformed these men, let him contrast them with the scribes and Pharisees of their own day, on the one hand, and with even the best of the Christians that followed in the post-apostolic age, on the other. Under the tutelage of Jesus they became like him, so much so that when the early persecutors of the Christians wondered at the knowledge and confidence with which the disciples spoke, they could not un-

derstand the matter till they found out that "they had been with Jesus."

And the early Christians understood that they were to teach. They did teach. This accounts for the fact that we have the Four Gospels with their story of Jesus and with their outline of his teaching. This explains the origin of the New Testament Epistles. The apostles, like their Master, were teachers—and they are still the teachers of the world. Jesus' command had been, "Go and make disciples of all nations . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And upon obedience to that command, he conditioned his promise, "Lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world." Which is to say: *the promise of the perpetual presence of Christ is to a teaching Church.* Saint Paul went round the Mediterranean as a herald of the gospel, calling men to Christ. But he did not stop at that. He visited his infant churches again and again in order to teach them and "edify" them, build them up in the faith. And then he wrote to them his marvelous letters. It was not enough that men in Galatia and Achaia and Asia had passed through the ex-

perience of conversion, mighty and marvelous as that experience was. The Galatians had to be saved from false teachers; the Corinthians had to be grounded in the fundamentals of the faith and to be taught that Christianity had to do with the practical everyday affairs of daily life; the Ephesians had to be built up in Christ. And what a teacher Paul was! Never did he bring his teaching down to his converts only recently won from ignorance and vice; always would he lift his disciples up to the lofty level of the message of Jesus.

And it needs to be borne in mind that mere revivalism will not get us anywhere unless preceded by teaching and followed by teaching. Revivalism alone will never save the world. Christian education is necessary to furnish a basis for any worth-while revivalism; and Christian education alone can conserve the results of revivalism. The revivalist reaches only those who have already been prepared to receive his message by Christian education in the home or in the school or in the Church. He must always find a point of contact, some principle and motive to appeal to, before he can bring any man to Christ. The soil of the

heart and mind must first have been prepared by parent or teacher, or pastor, before his evangelistic appeal can find lodgment and spring up and produce fruit. This is not a theory. It is a plain statement of fact.

By way of illustration and emphasis, let several things be noted.

It has generally been taken for granted that Paul did his great missionary work among heathen people and others who were entirely ignorant of the facts and principles of religion. Nothing could be farther from the truth. A greater mistake could not be made. All over the Roman Empire there were Jewish synagogues. In these the truths of the Old Testament religion were continually taught. Wherever Paul went, he first entered into the synagogue and taught. The scattering-abroad of the Jews and the building of synagogues had prepared a soil for the reception of the gospel. Without this preparation, one fails to see how the apostle could have made such headway in so short a time.

And there is more of the same sort to be said. The Jews were great proselytisers. In all lands and in all cities they sought to con-

vert men to their religion. The pure monotheism and lofty ethical teachings of the Old Testament drew many noble souls among the gentiles toward Judaism. Some of these passed over completely to the Jewish religion. The larger number went only part of the way, and remained not proselytes, but only near-proselytes. It was among these near-proselytes that Paul made the largest number of his converts from the gentiles to Christianity. Read the Acts of the Apostles and see. One finds there over and over again reference to "devout persons," and "those that feared God." Now these expressions have almost a technical meaning. That is to say, they are always applied to a certain class of gentiles who had already accepted the religious and moral teachings of the Jewish religion, but had not accepted circumcision and come over to the Jewish race. It will be remembered that when Paul arose to address a crowd on any occasion, his usual form of salutation was, "Brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and those among you that fear God." Composing the entire multitude were two classes—some were "children of the stock of Abraham" and the rest "those that

feared God," that is the devout gentiles who were present. Such a man was Jairus, such Cornelius, and such the Ethiopian Eunuch, unless, as seems more likely, the Ethiopian had become, in the full sense of the word, a proselyte. It would be going too far to say that in the early days of the Apostolic Church, there were no converts except from these classes which had been previously prepared for the gospel by learning the truths of the Old Testament. But it would be only an exaggeration of an obvious fact.

To come down to recent times. It has always been assumed that in the great Revival of Evangelical Religion which transformed England, the multitudes to whom John Wesley appealed and from whom he won so many converts, were utterly ignorant of the facts and truths of religion. That these multitudes were ignorant and often brutal is, of course, true. But it is certain that they were not ignorant of the elementary principles of religion. Isaac Taylor, in his study of *Wesley and Methodism,* points out with true philosophical insight, that *the Methodist revival succeeded exactly because it appealed continually to those fundamental*

things which all men at that time believed. And he adds: "If we are willing to trace the hand of God in the Methodist movement, we should acknowledge it in this instance—that it took place at the very verge of the period when the ancient belief as to future punishment was still entire." It has also been taken for granted that Wesley's itinerant preachers were men rescued from the grossest ignorance, men who had received no religious instruction in home or Church. This is a grave mistake. Wesley had his leading preachers write short sketches of their lives. These wonderful stories of "twice-born men" are still available in a series of volumes edited by Jackson. I have made a more or less careful study of them, and I find that almost without exception those early preachers write about their Christian mothers and the impression made on them in early childhood by the services of the Church of England. Then, when Wesley and his coadjutors came with their call to repentance and their offer of salvation, they awoke sleeping memories and appealed to truths and principles which these men had learned in childhood. The point of all this is, that there can

hardly be anything like what, for the want of a better word, I may call "naked" revivalism. Unless there is truth in the heart to appeal to, the appeal cannot be made. Unless the ground has been made ready, the seed cannot take root and spring up.

Take another case in point. One has often heard returned missionaries tell of the power of the gospel to convert the heathen. We do rejoice that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth. But it is doubted if any heathen was ever converted the first time he heard the gospel story. Men with very little knowledge of the gospel can be converted; but there must be some degree of knowledge. To invite men in total ignorance of the gospel to "Come to Jesus" would have no meaning whatsoever to those men. They must first know *who Christ is,* and *what he taught,* and *on what conditions they are to come to him,* before they will come to him, or indeed can come to him. If some of the early missionaries in non-Christian lands had only known this, they would have laboured to larger profit and would not have died with broken hearts.

What we need nowadays is a revival of the method of Jesus, the Master, the great Teacher. Dependence upon ritual and sacraments will not do. Neither will reliance on an accurate statement of creed, such as can be used as a rule-of-thumb, suffice. Neither can we depend upon the methods of revivalists when such methods, to begin with, lay no proper foundation of instruction, and end without grounding those who have made the great decision in the facts and truths of the religion of the New Testament. Men who profess to be Christians must be taught to live like Christ. Not the emotional experience of conversion only, and not the correct creed chiefly; but the transformed character and the daily carrying out in all its various applications of the teachings of Jesus—this is what the Church and the world need supremely.

For this is what Jesus said: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."

In the new life of Olive Schreiner, written by her husband, it is told how, when quite a small child she had read for the first time the

Sermon on the Mount, with great enthusiasm she rushed to her mother, saying: "Look what I have found! It's what I have known all along. *Now we can live like that!*" Yes, we can live like that. But people do not want to live like that. And professed Christians do not believe that we ought to live like that. Theoretically, of course, they believe it. But practically they do not believe anything of the kind.

Now just here lies the final test of our faith —whether or not we believe it enough to live according to the Sermon on the Mount.

This, then, is the question I purpose raising in the next lecture: "DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS?"

Lecture V

DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS?

"Follow me; and leave the dead to bury their own dead."
—*Matthew* 8:22.

Lecture V

DARE WE BE CHRISTIANS?

We have reached the point where we see plainly what the Program of Jesus is, and what it means to be a Christian. Christianity above all else is a method of living, or as we have it in the New Testament, "the Way" of life. Christianity has to do with creed and Christianity has to do with emotional experience. But creed is worthless and experience barren unless productive of fruits unto righteousness. And the final test of both creed and conversion is the kind of man they produce. This, indeed, is the ultimate end and aim of the Christian religion—to produce Christlike men and women and to regenerate human society.

We come now to ask: Are we willing to be Christians? Or let me rather put it this way: *Do we dare be Christians?* This question implies that many church members are not Christian because they do not dare to live according to the teachings of Jesus. It implies also that many others who approve in principle the teach-

ings of the Master have compromised in the application of those principles. The fact of the business is—and we had as well come out with the open confession—we have all compromised. Farmers, merchants, labouring men, capitalists, teachers, preachers—all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We have surrendered principle in the interest of expediency, or have crucified Christ afresh at the command of those in authority, or have timidly and with cowardice held back from making a universal application of the teachings of Jesus to all the things of life and conduct, or we have followed the doctrine that Christianity has to do only with the personal and private life of the individual as an individual.

The time has come for us as individuals to count the cost: Dare we be Christians? And the time has also come for the Church, that is Christianity as organised, to ask the question: Dare we be Christians? If we dare, then beware! Beware of what you are doing when you say that you will follow Jesus. A certain scribe once said to Jesus: "Teacher, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." And Jesus answered: "The foxes have holes, and

the birds of the heavens have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." "Following Jesus" is not any light-hearted and easy business. It is the most exacting thing a man can undertake in this life. It is easy enough to find the way to Jesus, if we are dead in earnest. He calls us to him and he plainly shows us the way. But beware what you are doing when you start out to *follow* Jesus.

"Hath he marks to lead me to him,
If he be my guide?
'In his feet and hands are wound prints,
And his side.'

"Is there diadem, as monarch,
That his brow adorns?
'Yea, a crown, in very surety,
But of thorns.'

"If I find him, if I follow,
What his guerdon here?
'Many a sorrow, many a labour,
Many a tear.'

. . . . .

"Finding, following, keeping, struggling,
Is he sure to bless?
'Saints, apostles, prophets, martyrs,
Answer, Yes.'"

It cost the apostles and early disciples something to be Christians. But they dared! And as a result we have the Christian Church and the best things in our Western civilisation. The Christian Church of the first centuries overcame the world because Christians dared to be Christians and refused to compromise. As Professor T. R. Glover puts it:

> "Into this world comes the Christian Church—a ludicrous collection of trivial people, very ignorant and very common; fishermen and publicans, as the Gospels show us; 'the baker and the fuller,' as Celsus said with a sneer. . . . One of them wrote an Apocalypse. He was in a penal settlement on Patmos when he wrote it. The sect was in a fair way of being stamped out in blood as a matter of fact; but this dreamer saw a triumphant Church of ten thousand times ten thousand—and thousands of thousands—there were hardly as many people in the world at that time; the great Rome had fallen and the 'Lamb' ruled. Imagine the amusement of a Roman pagan of 100 A.D. who read the absurd book. Yet the dream

has come true; that Church has triumphed. Where is the old religion? Christ has conquered, and all the gods have gone, utterly gone—they are memories now, and nothing more. Why did they go? The Church refused to compromise. . . . The Christian proclaimed a war of religion in which there shall be no compromise and no peace, till Christ is Lord of all; the thing shall be fought out to the bitter end. And it has been. He was resolved that the old gods should go; and they have gone." [1]

As illustrative of the uncompromising spirit of the early Christian Church, there is no finer instance than the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas. Perpetua was a young woman of noble birth while Felicitas was a slave. Spies had broken in upon the meeting place of the Christians, and what made Perpetua's offence all the more monstrous was that she was found associating with a slave. They were condemned to death and sentenced to be thrown to the wild bulls at the next public festival. Felicitas was delivered of a child in the dungeon

[1] "The Jesus of History," pp. 199-200.

just two days before the games; and when the jailor reminded her of the still keener pains of martyrdom which she was soon to endure, she replied: "Now I suffer what I suffer; but then another will suffer for me, because I shall suffer for him." Everything possible was done to get Perpetua, who was herself a young mother, to renounce her religion. Her aged father came to her and begged her for his sake to renounce her foolish superstition. Her young and helpless babe was held up before her swollen breasts in piteous appeal. But her faith and her resolution remained firm. Everything possible was done to save the life of this noble young Christian. She might worship the Emperor only once. She might offer just a little incense to the Emperor—just a little pinch of incense, that was all. But she wavered not. The two young women—noble and slave—were first tossed by the wild bulls and then the gladiators put an end to their sufferings. "They overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."

The situation that confronts us to-day is different. Our civilisation is supposed to be

Christian. It is now more or less the popular thing for one to be a member of the Church. Our national government goes forward under the forms and ceremonies of the Christian religion. But our civilisation is not Christian —it is still to a large degree pagan. To be a Church member is one thing; to be a Christian is another. And it has become popular for men of a certain type to make loud professions of orthodoxy and stirring calls to defend the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. But the orthodoxy they wish to defend is too often the orthodoxy of the interests, and the faith for which they contend so vehemently is frequently the faith of individualism, which denies that business and politics ought to be brought under the rule of the Prince of Peace. And so it comes about that once more one must take his reputation in his hand when he lifts up the banner of Jesus Christ, all stained as it is with the blood of sacrifice, and dares to call men to follow Jesus whithersoever he goes. Thus, as a matter of fact, the situation is not so different after all from what it was in the grand heroic days of Christianity.

I

Speaking in the most general terms, if we dare to be Christians we must undertake to apply the principles of Jesus to the betterment of the world we live in. We must understand that the world itself is the subject of redemption.

Pure individualism has failed, and hopelessly failed, to save the world. At the rate we are going, we are making one-sided Christians, self-satisfied Church members, dwarfed and stunted human lives, and damaged and damned souls faster than there is any possibility of saving them one by one. And not only so, influences from the un-Christian world have come up into our homes and our Christian churches. We cannot build a Chinese wall about our churches; we cannot hermetically seal our homes against the godless and Christless spirit of the world without. Thus it has come about that not only are we unable to save society by our present method of pure individualism, we are not even able to save our churches and our homes and our own children. For if life be, as we have been told, the ad-

justment of internal relations to external relations; and if religion has to do with the total life of a man, then there cannot possibly be any such thing as a perfect life in an imperfect environment. Just so long as social and economic conditions are un-Christian, just so long will even the best Christians feel their baneful consequences. I am well aware that to a large degree the Christian creates his own immediate environment, and I am not overlooking the vast significance of Saint Paul's profound insight when he writes, "Our citizenship is in heaven." But I am affirming a self-evident, if long-forgotten fact, that even our best is lower than Christ's best so long as we live and move and have our being in a world gone wrong.

For all life is bound up in one bundle. I do not know how better to express what I am trying to say than in the following lines, which I clipped from a newspaper years ago:

"From slums where foul diseases hide
The free winds travel far and wide.

"The rich man living on the square,
Throws wide his windows for the air.

"His petted child, with every breath,
Drinks in the viewless seeds of death.

"The rich man, bowed down by his woe,
Wonders why God should send the blow.

"The parson wonders, too, and prays,
And talks of God's mysterious ways.

"But know, O man of high estate,
You are bound up with the poor man's fate.

"The winds that enter at your door
Have crept across his attic floor,

"If you would have all well with you,
Then must you seek his welfare too.

"If even selfishness were wise,
It would no other life despise."

To use Saint Paul's figure, "We are members one of another." If one member suffers, all suffer; if one member rejoices, all rejoice. The truth of social solidarity is not only a truth of science; it is a doctrine of Christianity.

If, then, we are to have clean and healthy children of our own, we must labour to make all children clean and healthy. If we are

to keep our own families free from disease and sin, we must strive to keep the community in which we live free from disease and sin. In order to do this, we must ask, Whence come sin and disease? We must do more than endeavour to cure individuals of sickness and save individuals from sin. We must seek out the causes of the evils that are in the world. We must heal the open sores of human society and destroy the secret breeding places of vice and crime.

Such is the method of the modern scientific physician. He seeks out causes. That was not the way of the doctor of the old school. Blessings on the doctor of the old school! We shall not look upon his like again. He was the friend and advisor of the family. He was not second even to the beloved pastor in the home. I shall never forget him. He came often to the home of my childhood. He was one of nature's noblemen. He thought not of himself; he lived for his patients. When typhoid fever entered the home, he did all he knew to do. He wrapped the patient in cold wet sheets to keep down fever. If necessary, he himself sat up all night as nurse as well as physician. When

death came, he sorrowed with the family, and kneeled down and prayed with the broken-hearted. He was loved and honoured by the entire community. And when he died, we all —men and women and little children—went out to the churchyard where they buried him, and mourned the loss of our best and truest friend. Blessings forever on his holy memory!

But the doctor of the old school did not know the cause of typhoid fever. He tried to save the individual. Sometimes he saved him while the entire family was stricken down with the dread disease. But when the scientific doctor of to-day calls in such a case, he gives not less care to the saving of the individual; he understands the cause of the disease, and as a rule he saves the endangered life. And he does more than this. He asks: What kind of water do you drink? Where do you buy your milk? Where do you get the fruit you eat? Is your house entirely free from flies? He knows the lurking places of typhoid. He knows what the carriers of the fever are. He goes to work to save the entire family and, it may be, the whole community, by destroying the disease in its breeding places.

And this is what we must do if we are Christians. It is folly—it is sheer stupidity—to leave the dens of vice and the lurking places of sin untouched while we call in evangelists to save as many separate individuals as possible. By all means have the evangelist to carry individuals out of the house that is afire; but call out the fire company and put out the fire! Save the entire house! In the name of Jesus Christ, it is time to cease our pious talk about "only conversion can save the world" and "the soul of all improvement is the improvement of the soul"—self-evident platitudes both, which are most often used by men obsessed with the individualistic conception of the gospel. Certainly only "conversion" can save the world. Certainly "the improvement of the soul" is our ultimate concern. Only the soul has final and absolute value. Every other value is such only as it relates to the soul. But what are the conditions in human society that make it well-nigh impossible to "convert" sinners? How can we bring about conditions which will certainly lead to "the improvement of the soul"? Such are the questions we must ask.

And immediately we begin to ask such ques-

tions, we find ourselves getting into difficulty. Too many damaging institutions still have the patronage of Church people. Too many damning influences still have the approval of a so-called Christian society. Jesus said: "I came not to send peace, but a sword." And just as soon as one begins to dare to be a Christian, one bids farewell to peace and finds the sword raised against his efforts to follow him who was nailed to the cross.

II

We have just made a bare beginning. We must go much further if we dare to be Christians. We have as yet been speaking almost entirely in negative terms. We must be more positive. We must not merely try to close up the breeding places of sin. We must endeavour to bring about conditions of health. We must do more than abolish slavery, and close gambling dens, and destroy the open saloon, and outlaw white slavery. We must ask, What health-giving institutions can be created? and what will take away the impulse and desire to continue such evil things in the world?

The question is a religious one. It is also an economic question. It will be remembered that the first temptation that assailed Jesus at the outset of his ministry was the fundamental economic question, the question of bread—"Turn stones into bread." And always this is a fundamental question: Where do men get their bread? How do men get their bread? It is certain that even here in America, the richest and most prosperous country in the world, the land of abundant plenty, the large majority of men and women earn their daily bread under conditions that dwarf the mind and stunt the soul. It is certain that the vast majority of Church members give no thought to bringing about better living conditions for their brother men. It is also certain that just as soon as any man who is in dead earnest begins to attack the problem of better living conditions for the rank and file of people, he will immediately be made to understand why the central symbol of the Christian religion is the cross of Christ.

And it is certain that right here is the ground and cause of nearly all the strife and confusion and war and bloodshed in the world,

not only between individuals, but between classes and between nations. The law of the jungle, and not the law of Christ, still rules in our world—the law of Grab and Keep, and not the law of Love and Serve.

What I am saying is that the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ must be made to apply to economic conditions everywhere. Christ must be Lord everywhere, or he is Lord nowhere. One cannot be a Christian at home in the bosom of his family, and a slave-driver in his factory. If Jesus Christ is not sufficient to solve the problems of labour and capital, then we had better try some other religion. But there is no other religion to try. If Christianity fails, the economic world is doomed, and society collapses.

I have no Utopian dreams. I understand fully that the disease is more than a functional disorder; it is a chronic organic malady. Deep in human nature lie the seat and source of economic ills. We shall not lose sight of that. No scheme of communism has ever solved the problem, nor ever will. You cannot reduce all men to one dead level. God did not make them that way. To some men God has given ten

talents, to some five, and to others only one. Nothing is more self-evident than this fact of inequality in natural endowment. And some men can do one thing and some another. There are men who are naturally endowed with ability to make money. Money-making comes easy to them. There are men who have great ability as organisers and administrators. Business prospers under their direction. There are other men who have marvelous ability to labour with their hands. They know how to make things. They rejoice in the ability to create. They are sculptors and painters and mechanics. The world would be poor without them. They are the creators of the useful and the beautiful. And then, too, in all walks of life there are men who can do little or nothing when left to themselves. They need guidance; they must have direction. They also can make their contribution to the upbuilding of human society and the coming of the Kingdom of God, but it must be with the assistance of others. All men are equal before God and before the law; but not all men are equal in mental endowments any more than all men are equal in physical strength.

What then can be done to change the economic order, so as to give larger opportunities to all men? The answer is plain: We must dare to be Christians. We must dare to apply the teachings of Jesus to all our business relations. What are some of these principles? Here they are:

1. *The Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.*

That will change everything, if life is under its guidance. The man of wealth will recognise that this man who works for him is not his slave, nor a mere "hand," nor a tool. He will feel that he is a human being, made in the image of God and destined to immortality. And the man who toils with his hands will recognise that his employer is not his master, nor his "boss," nor the manipulator of a machine of which he is just one wheel, but a human being like himself made in God's image and a brother according to the teachings of Jesus.

2. *Ultimate values are human values.*

This is the second principle that must be recognised both by labour and by capital. This is to say that ultimate values lie in the soul. Things have in themselves no intrinsic worth.

They get their worth only from men to whom they are worth something; and that worth is a spiritual thing. Civilisation is to be built up, not by erecting lasting monuments of marble, not by building great cities, not by establishing immense business enterprises, not by accumulating great wealth, and not by turning all power over into the hands of one class, whether as in Russia before the revolution or as in Russia since the revolution. Civilisation is a spiritual thing. Human values are the only values that count. No matter how wealth may accumulate, if men decay, then does the land soon hasten to destruction. As Christian business men, and as Christian working men, we must recognise this essential truth, this controlling principle. Otherwise we shall go on from bad to worse till the cycle is complete and Western civilisation goes the way of all the giant forms of empires that have towered and are gone.

3. *All abilities, whether ability to accumulate wealth or ability to work with our hands, must be recognised as a gift from God and as held in trust for the service of humanity.*

A recognition that we hold these things in trust from God for our brother men, will make

all life different. Over and over again does Jesus lay down this teaching. The parable of the "Talents" and the parable of the "Pounds" will come immediately to mind. Sooner or later the Judge of men shall say to every one of us, "Give account of thy stewardship." We are absolute owners of nothing here in this world. At best and longest, we are only trustees for a lifetime. Then everything drops from the loosened hand at death. Whatsoever we may have, whether of money or ability to work, is nothing more than a trust from God, to give us opportunity to make some worthwhile contribution to the spiritual riches of the world, to the creation of human values, the only wealth that has real existence and that can have permanent abiding power.

We have advanced far enough now to see that there is and can be no necessary conflict between those who lay stress on the social aspects of the gospel and those who insist on the application of the gospel to the individual. It would be just as foolish to say that religion had to do with one's immortal soul and not with one's earthly life. It has to do with both, and both must be stressed if the whole gospel

is preached and applied. The two are just the right and the left hand of religion, they are just the bottom and the top of our social system. Or rather they are the inside and the outside. You cannot have one without the other. *But always the inside is of first importance.* For "life's tragedies cannot be escaped by a reconstruction of society, for the tragic is within us." It was the fundamental error of the French Revolution, as we have already seen, that human nature as we find it is good and right, and that only human society is wrong. And strange to say, many of our teachers and leaders in religious and economic thought, still insist that the outside organisation of society is of greater importance than the inner regeneration of the human heart. The two must go together. The man who stresses the one and not the other is an out-and-out heretic—he teaches only half the gospel of Jesus Christ.

III

If we dare be Christians, we must advance yet further still. The world is made up not only of men and women occupying different

stations in human society; it is also composed of people of different races and different colours. If we dare be Christians, we must apply the teachings of Jesus to the solution of all interracial problems.

Here we touch the most delicate questions imaginable. Once more let us ask: Dare we be Christians? If we "dare," Christianity will solve all these problems. If we do not dare, there are before the whole world strifes and conflicts innumerable. As a matter of fact, the acid test of our Christianity is to be found just here: Can it solve the race question in America and in all the world? I believe with all my heart that it can; and I believe that it is the only thing in the world that will. When I speak of the race question I am thinking of the race question in America; and I am thinking also of the race question all over the world as it has to do with white, and yellow, and brown, as well as with black people. This is the most crucial question that white races will have to deal with during the next fifty years. Our handling of it may mean the wrecking or the permanent establishment of Christian civilisation.

The situation which the world confronts is in brief as follows: During the last four centuries the white race has come into such a position of place and power as it never before knew in human history. Following the discovery of America, white men went out over all the earth and took possession or assumed control. As a natural sequence, there followed an amazing increase in white population in the earth. It has been estimated that nearly one-third of all the human beings to-day on the face of the earth are white people. It has also been estimated that white people now occupy four-tenths of the habitable earth and control as much as nine-tenths of it. This gives to the white man such influence and power in the world as was never held by any race since time began.

And now comes forward a group of scientists who insist that all that is best in civilisation to-day is the natural flower and fruit of what they are pleased to call "the great Nordic race;" and that the continuance of this Nordic race depends on the mastery and subjugation of other peoples and the preservation of the "germ-plasm," back to which everything

worth while may be traced. Certain writers like Lothrop Stoddard, in his lurid books, "The Rising Tide of Color" and "The Revolt Against Civilisation," and Madison Grant in his "The Passing of the Great Race," have brought forward a philosophy of history and culture, in the name of the latest biological science, which, if in accord with scientific fact, would command us to discard entirely the whole Christian conception of life, treat all other races as underlings and servants, and by force push forward to supreme mastery and absolute control. Madison Grant writes as follows:

> "If this great race, with its capacity for leadership and fighting, should ultimately pass, with it would pass what we call civilisation. It would be succeeded by an unstable and bastardised population, where worth and merit would have no inherent right to leadership, and among which a new and darker age would blot out our racial inheritance. Such a catastrophe cannot threaten if the Nordic race will gather itself together in time, shake off the shackles of

an inveterate altruism, discard the phantom of internationalism, and reassert the pride of race and the right of merit to rule." [2]

There you see it! Atheistic, anti-Christian materialism, pure and simple, and naked and unashamed!

Let me in a few words dismiss this whole materialistic doctrine, and then I shall proceed to lay down certain Christian principles.

1. All this talk about the great blue-eyed, fair-haired Nordic race is little more than a myth. It was in pre-war days much overworked in Germany, and it is a pity to see it being brought into service in America.

2. The theory that all culture roots back in the germ-plasm and that the germ-plasm remains constant through the centuries, never subject to change, has no right to announce itself to the world as established scientific fact. Few things are more debated among biologists at the present time than whether or not acquired characters are hereditary.

3. There is a social and spiritual inheritance as well as a race inheritance, and this inherit-

[2] Introduction to "The Rising Tide of Color."

ance is a most potent factor in developing ability and producing character. One reads history in vain, if one fails to see this. For if the white races of the world have in recent years come into large control over the affairs of the world, it is certain that this is largely because, in spite of certain un-Christian characteristics which remain, they have, under the tutelage of Christianity, developed a type of morality and self-mastery which has given them the ability to command.

I proceed to lay down certain Christian principles, in the light of which we must govern all our conduct:

1. *It must not be forgotten that race is of divine ordainment.* The black man, the red man, the brown man, the yellow man, the white man—God created them all. God is the Father of all. This is stating a great truth very briefly. But if we believe it fully, then it will by itself settle most other matters.

2. God created the various races. They do differ the one from the other. The difference is so great that it was natural for the Greek to call one of another race a "Barbarian"; and we must admit that it was natural for the

Chinese to speak of men from the West as "foreign devils," especially when we read history. It was inevitable that antipathies should develop. *But, nevertheless, it is affirmed that the essential unity of the human race is deeper and more vital than are all diversities.* Saint Paul was speaking both as a philosopher and as an interpreter of Jesus, when on Mars' Hill he said: "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth," and afterward went on to quote and give his approval to the language of a well-known Greek poet, "For we are also his offspring." And Paul's language is even stronger than the familiar translation would indicate; for the word "blood" is not in the Greek text. What he said was "God hath made *of one.*" The essential oneness of the human race, tracing back to one God, whose offspring all nations are—this is what Paul affirmed that day in the presence of the Greek scholars and teachers. Thus every human heart is human. Every man stands in need of God; every man is destined to immortality; every man comes to his best when in fellowship and love with his human brothers; every

man has latent within him divine possibilities breathed into him by his Creator and begotten by his Father. The things that unite us are vastly more significant than the things that divide.

3. *The question of the natural superiority of one race over another is one that Christians will not have much to say about.* No gentleman ever boasts of his superiority over other men. Rather does a Christian recognise the truth of the proverb, *Noblesse oblige*—Rank imposes obligations. Present race superiority may be merely a matter of accident, or what is of more importance, it may be a matter of divine election. I mean to say we may be called to serve, as ancient Israel was. We may hold certain gifts in trust for the whole world. Or, what we take to be our own superiority over the other races of the world, may after all be only the result of our self-conceit and narrow provincialism. A better knowledge of ourselves and a fuller knowledge of other races, might lead us to take a more humble and Christian view of the white races of the world.

After all, the question of the superiority of

one race over another may be like asking which was the great race of antiquity, the Greek, the Roman, or the Hebrew? The answer would be each was greatest in its own sphere. Or it might be like asking the question that schoolboys sometimes discuss, Which is greater, man or woman? The answer is, Man is greater when most a man, and woman is greater when most a woman.

What is needed, then, is that as Christians we should learn more about the great races of the world and study to appreciate the special and distinguishing qualities that they have been endowed with by their Creator. *The whole world will come to be what God intended it to be, not when reduced to the dead level of one race, and certainly not when racial lines are obliterated and all races merged in one mongrel race, but when each race shall come to its highest development and render to God and humanity the full service God originally intended.*

All this is to say with all possible emphasis that no race is to be enslaved, no race is to be subjugated, no race is to be kept back and held down, no race is to be treated with contempt, no race is to be despised. Race hatred has no

place in a Christian heart. Neither has racial contempt any place there.

4. *The sincere Christian, then, dares to put himself at the service of races that have not been so fortunate as his own in intellectual and spiritual opportunities.* Here again emerges the law of the cross. The Christian believes so fully in the power of Christ to save, that he dares to trust his best spiritual possessions to peoples lacking even in civilisation. Madison Grant warns us against "intrusting our ideals to brown, yellow, black, or red men." That is precisely what the Christian does and must do. Once more, Saint Paul, who was the greatest of all the interpreters of the mind of Jesus, comes immediately to the heart of the matter when he writes: "I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." That is to say, the Christian is under obligation to all races and to all classes, civilised and uncivilised, cultured and untaught. In Christ "there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bondman, freeman; but Christ is all, and in all."

And all that is here said applies, and is in-

tended to apply, to the relation of white people to coloured people here in the United States. Just in so far as we fall short of these fundamental Christian principles, just that far do we fall short of being Christians. The one solution of all race problems is in the religion of Jesus Christ.

IV

We come now to our final application of the teachings of Jesus to the problems of life. What shall we say about *war?* Is *war* in harmony with the doctrines of the New Testament? Dare we be Christians and apply the principles of Jesus to the dealings of one nation with another?

Bernhardi, in his noted book, "Germany and the Next War," published in 1911, lays down this doctrine:

> "Christian morality is based, indeed, on the law of love. 'Love God above all things and thy neighbour as thyself.' This law can claim no significance for the relation of one country to another, since its application to

politics would lead to a conflict of duties. The love which a man showed to another country as such would imply a want of love for his own countrymen. Such a system of politics must inevitably lead men astray. Christian morality is personal and social, and in its nature cannot be political. Its object is to promote morality in the individual in order to strengthen him to work unselfishly in the interests of the community. . . . The acts of the state cannot be judged by the standards of individual morality. If the state wished to conform to this standard it would often find itself at variance with its own particular duties. . . . But the end-all and be-all of the state is power, and 'he who is not man enough to look this truth in the face, should not meddle in politics.'" [3]

The anti-Christian principle was possibly never put so bluntly and brutally. This, as everybody knows, was the doctrine openly professed by Germany. And we should not disguise from ourselves the fact that while Great Britain and America did not brazenly trumpet

[3] See pp. 29 and 45.

this doctrine abroad, before the Great War very few were found, either in England or America, who advocated any other doctrine of the relation of one nation to another. But the old world came to an end in A.D. 1914. The World War stabbed our spirits broad awake. Christians everywhere are now asking: Do not the teachings of Jesus apply as between nation and nation as well as between individual and individual?

Let us be perfectly frank. Our motives are not entirely disinterested. Self-interest has a large part in the present reaction against all war. Fear, as always, is proving to be a mighty motive. We see now that war ends nothing evil; that it destroys only what is good. We see now that civilisation itself will be destroyed unless Christianity rises up and puts an end to war. The pomp and glamour of war have gone forever. The naked savagery and coarse brutality of it all have been brought home to every human heart.

During the World War the United States alone spent for two years more than a million dollars an hour, day and night, in the work of destruction and death. And it has been es-

timated that the total loss in human lives, directly and indirectly due to the War, mounted up to the appalling figure of 40,000,000. The World War was the greatest calamity that ever befell the human race. And it grew naturally and inevitably out of the pagan principles which universally had been adopted by so-called Christian nations. I quote now from an address made by our great war President, Woodrow Wilson:

> "I do not hesitate to say that the war we have just been through, though it was shot through with terror of every kind, is not to be compared with the war we would have to face next time. There were destructive gases, there were methods of explosive destruction unheard of even during this war, which were just ready for use when the war ended—great projectiles that guided themselves and shot into the heavens went for a hundred miles and more and then burst tons of explosives upon helpless cities, something to which the guns with which the Germans bombarded Paris from a distance were not comparable. What the Germans used were

toys as compared with what would be used in the next war. Ask any soldier if he wants to go through a hell like that again. The soldiers know what the next war would be. They know what the inventions were that were just about to be used for the absolute destruction of mankind."[4]

The loss in wealth and the loss in human lives brought about by the great World War have been appalling beyond words to express. But there are worse losses than men and money. Not since the barbarian invasion and the collapse of Roman civilisation has there been such a loss in moral values and spiritual ideals. Systematically and scientifically men were stirred up to hate men. Men do not naturally hate each other. Nations are not naturally enemies. Therefore, a campaign of hatred was put on everywhere. Epithets were coined to appeal to the imagination. "Bosche" and "Hun" were words often on Christian lips. And even from Christian pulpits in some places sounded forth the horrible Mohammedan doc-

[4] Woodrow Wilson's "Case for the League of Nations," pp. 202-203.

trine that the soldier killed in battle would pass directly into Paradise! And what a breakdown in morals has the world witnessed! We were fighting to protect womanhood, and the war has degraded womanhood everywhere, while such pagan standards of morals in reference to the relation of women to men have been propagated as English-speaking peoples never tolerated before. Crime waves and general lawlessness naturally followed the greatest crime in human history—the great World War.

And we had hoped that having learned to work together during the period of the war, the churches in America would henceforth see and know the value of a closer co-operation. But, alas! even the churches turned against each other, and there is such strife and confusion, such charges of infidelity and heresy as we have not known in our lifetime nor in the lifetime of our fathers, while epithets are bandied about, and devout and sincere followers of Jesus find themselves labelled and ostracised by fellow Christians because forsooth their tongue slips just a little when they attempt to pronounce the word "shibboleth."

War destroys civilisation. War destroys the very foundations upon which civilisation rests. Nothing destroys like war. What is war but utter and desolating waste of everything that man and God hold dear?

"Waste of Muscle, waste of Brain,
Waste of Patience, waste of Pain,
Waste of Manhood, waste of Health,
Waste of Beauty, waste of Wealth,
Waste of Blood, and waste of Tears,
Waste of Youth's most precious years,
Waste of Ways the Saints have trod,
Waste of Glory, waste of God,—
War!"

And now above the noise and din of battle, and far above all the waste and confusion and hatreds of these post-war days, we hear once more the word of the ancient prophet, "His name shall be called the Prince of Peace"; we catch once more the strains of heavenly music above the hills of Bethlehem: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom he is well pleased"; and once again we hear the sweet accents of Jesus' voice as he says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for

theirs is the kingdom of heaven. . . . Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. . . . Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

Will we dare to be Christians?

The fatherhood of God; the brotherhood of man; the infinite worth of the human soul; the supreme importance of the ethical and spiritual; the duty of each to serve all and all to serve each—here are the principles that must guide us. We must go forward to Utopia or we shall go backward to Hell.

But what about the other nations of the world. What if they will not permit us to have peace? What if they prepare for war and force it on us? No, not "what about the other nations of the world"! But what about ourselves? Will we make the venture? Will we dare? Have we faith in God? Or have we not yet come to have faith in Jesus?

It was comforting and reassuring the other day to find a little band of Christians in far-off China fully ready to follow Jesus. Here is a letter written by twenty-five American missionaries to the American Minister at Peking, Dr. Jacob Gould Schurman:

"The undersigned American missionaries are in China as messengers of the gospel of brotherhood and peace. Our task is to lead men and women into a new life in Christ which promotes brotherhood and takes away all occasion of wars. We, therefore, express our earnest desire that no form of military pressure, especially no foreign military force, be exerted to protect us or our property; and that in the event of our capture by lawless persons or our death at their hands, no money be paid for our release, no punitive expeditions be sent out, no indemnities be exacted. We take this stand believing that the way to establish righteousness and peace is through bringing the spirit of personal goodwill to bear on all persons under all circumstances, even through suffering wrong without retaliation. This is what we understand the example of Jesus Christ to mean. We wish to be clear that we have no authority to speak for our missions or churches, and sign simply in our individual capacity."

All honour to Christians who have the faith that dares! It was faith and conduct like this

that conquered in the first Christian centuries. If the first Christians had taken the sword, they would have perished by the sword.

And this same principle must be applied in all international affairs. This little group in far-away China do not stand isolated and alone. They give utterances to principles that are now becoming dominant in the souls of millions of Christian believers in all parts of the world. If war is wrong, why tolerate it? Since war is un-Christian, why put up with it any longer? We have tried everything else and failed. Has not the time at last come to try the teachings of Jesus? We thought that the importance and necessity of commerce between nations would make another war impossible; but commerce brought on the war. We had supposed that science would be able to banish war from the earth; but science became "procuress to the lords of hell" and rendered war immeasurably more brutal and hellish than it had ever been. We had gone on the supposition that diplomacy would be able to put a stop to war; but diplomacy was one of the contributing causes to the war. And we had acted in the belief that the distance of America from the

scene of conflict would keep us out of the war; but when the conflagration spread over all the world, the flames of war soon enveloped us also. And so I insist, now that everything else has failed and proved a failure, the time has come when Christians should rise up and say, "Let us dare to be Christians. Let us call for a return to the first principles of Christianity."

This is not to be understood as merely a negative aloofness from war. We must take a very positive position. We must outlaw war. That is certain. For if private and individual murder is wrong, public and national murder is wrong also. And just as private murder has been outlawed, just as the duel is now relegated to the discarded customs of an outgrown past, even so must we now go on to declare war a criminal and an outlaw. And we must do more than this. As Christians and as patriotic citizens, we must do all we can do to remove the causes of war. *We must cast off the provincial mind and become citizens of the world. We must labour toward a mutual understanding between all races and all nations. We must religiously give ourselves*

to the cultivation of interracial and international goodwill. We must come to see that America cannot stand apart from the rest of the world in times of peace any more than she did in the time of war. We should recognise that the League of Nations is a going concern and should come in at the front door and not attempt to slip in at the back door. We should throw our influence solidly behind the effort to establish a World Court for the settlement of international difficulties. We should call upon all men of goodwill everywhere to arise for the salvation of the world.

Does some one say that this is all impracticable? Well, the most impracticable thing ever attempted was when Jesus and twelve disciples started out to convert the world. To the wise men of this world, Christianity has always seemed foolishness and a stumbling block. But faith is the victory that overcomes the world. And if Christians will only believe and fully follow Jesus, Christ will conquer all his foes.

This then is the Program of Jesus, to build here on earth the Kingdom of God. What Jesus purposes to do is to bring individual men

back into fellowship with God and into loving service of their brother men—to save the social order also, so that every child may grow up under conditions favourable to the development of the best that is in him—to redeem labour from hatred and selfishness and to turn capital from iniquity to righteousness, directing it to the upbuilding of humanity—to teach all races that they are children of one common Father and to lead each race to make its God-appointed contribution toward the perfect brotherhood of man—to banish hatred and war out of the world, and to lead all nations to see that the wisest diplomacy is always in harmony with the teachings of Jesus.

Do you say: It cannot be done?

I say: *With God all things are possible. And nothing is impossible with men who will dare to be Christians.*

Lecture VI

THE PROGRAM OF JESUS THE BEST CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC

"The works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me."

—*John* 10:25.

Lecture VI

THE PROGRAM OF JESUS THE BEST CHRISTIAN APOLOGETIC

Apologetics has been defined as "that branch of demonstrative or argumentative theology which is concerned with the grounds and defence of Christian belief and hope." In other words, apologetics is the presentation of the truth of Christianity as against objections offered to it, with a view to gaining the assent of the mind, the favour of the heart, and the co-operation of the will. While from the very beginning of Christian history, the religion of Jesus has always been an offensive movement for the conquest of the world, it has at the same time found it necessary to defend itself against the attacks of its enemies and to demonstrate its right to the full and final allegiance of all men everywhere.

Already, within the New Testament period, we find that Christian writers felt themselves under the necessity of defending their faith

against their adversaries and showing to the world the superiority of Christianity over Judaism and all other forms of religion. Saint Paul does this over and over again in his great addresses both before Jewish and Gentile audiences. But the outstanding example of apologetic in the New Testament is the Epistle to the Hebrews, which has properly been called "The First Apology for Christianity." The writer shows the superiority of Christ over all others who have been ministers and mediators of religion. He shows also the superiority of the Christian salvation, which he calls "so great salvation," over the blessings enjoyed under the Old Covenant. He carefully points out how the bare outline of "good things to come" had been at last fully developed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the early centuries of the Christian Era the followers of Christ were forced to "contend earnestly for the faith." In general, they followed four lines of defence. They argued for the superiority and final truth of the Christian religion from *the Miracles* recorded in the Bible and performed by Christ; from *the Prophecies* which had been clearly fulfilled, and

more especially had been fulfilled in the coming of Jesus; from *the Superiority of the Moral lives of Christians* over the lives of the heathen; and from *the Rapid Spread of the Gospel throughout the world.* It is a mistake to suppose that all the early Christians were illiterate. They were, to say the least, a fair average; and many of them were far above the average. They soon came to number among their defenders men who were able to cope with the wisest and most learned scholars of their time. Not all their arguments would we make use of to-day; but, as a simple matter of fact, they did strike out along the great highway of apologetic thinking which the Church has followed throughout all the centuries.

Not one word is said in the present lecture by way of discounting the great historic defences of the faith. Intellectual giants met the issues of their day as they arose, and judged purely from the standpoint of philosophy and sound thinking, their work ranks with the best that has been done by men who have devoted themselves to the discussion of the great problems of religion and ethics.

What is now proposed is to bring forward

certain arguments for the truth of the Christian religion in such a way as will reach the mind and heart of the average man. I would, in the present lecture, take apologetics out of the realm of the metaphysical and put the appeal in the realm of the practical. I mean to say that the best way to convince men of the superlative value of the religion of the New Testament is by showing them what Jesus purposed doing, and by getting them to throw themselves heartily into the business of carrying out his program. Men may be in doubt about many things, but there can no longer be any doubt that Christianity alone offers any hope for the solution of the problems of human society. Besides, the truths of Christianity shine in their own light. They make their direct appeal to the conscience and the heart. There has been *discussion* often when there should have been *proclamation*. It is my purpose to show that Christianity carries its own evidence along with it wherever it is presented as a program for daily living. And in addition to this, knowing comes through doing. When one lives like a Christian, he puts Christianity to the test and finds out for himself the eternal

reality of the spiritual principles which underlie all the teachings of Jesus. This is what I have in mind when I say that the Program of Jesus is the Best Christian Apologetic.

I

What Christ has done in the world is evidence of what he is, and an assurance of what he will yet do in human hearts and in human society. When the Jews said to him, "If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly," Jesus replied, "I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, these bear witness of me." This is the point where we are laying stress at this time. *The works of Jesus are his best credentials.*

Recall how John the Baptist once sent messengers to Jesus saying: "Art thou he that cometh, or look we for another?" At that very time Jesus was doing many wonderful things. He cured many of diseases and plagues and evil spirits; and on many that were blind he bestowed sight. And Jesus answered and said to the messengers of John: "Go tell John the things which ye have seen and heard; the

blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have glad tidings preached unto them. And blessed is he whosoever shall find no occasion of stumbling in me." Thus did Jesus present to John his best credentials. And this has been the answer of Christianity to the questioning world through all the centuries: "Go show all sad and doubting hearts what Christ actually does in the world."

From the very first, Christian preachers and apostles have been able to show the world what Jesus does. One recalls what Saint Paul said to the Corinthians. They had lived in the corruptest sort of civilisation. They had come under its power to such an extent that the apostle in writing to them, names over such horrible names as these, "fornicators, "idolaters," "adulterers," "effeminate," "sodomites," "thieves," "covetous," "drunkards," "extortioners"; and then goes on to say triumphantly: *"And such were some of you: but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."* This is precisely what Christianity did in that early age

of the Church. And by doing this it was able to conquer. This was an unanswerable argument with the early apologists of the Christian Church. As Gwatkin says:

> "They could throw down the challenge, Are not Christians better than heathens? Are not our common people more virtuous than your philosophers? Is not conversion morally a change for the better? Do we not leave behind the three great sins of idolatry, whoredom, and usury, and become sober and peaceable men, fearing God and eschewing evil? What fault can you find with us, except that we are Christians? But no human skill can put the full force of this argument. Deeper than we know is the appeal of a saintly life, peradventure sealed with blood: and if many of the Christians fell short of saintliness, there were saints enough among them to overcome the world." [1]

It is told in the Gospel story how when Jesus had given sight to a blind man, the Jews were

[1] "Early Church History," Vol. I, p. 201.

greatly disturbed and in much confusion. They did not know what to make of it. But seeing the blind man standing there, blind no longer but able to see plainly, they could say nothing against it. This kind of evidence cannot be discounted.

Another has said that the prevailing attitude of the modern man to Christianity is one of "intellectual confusion but of moral sympathy." And after all, moral sympathy is the essential and supreme thing. We are not governed and guided by the intellect anything like as much as we flatter ourselves that we are. We are controlled most by our moral sympathies. And if our moral sympathy is on the side of Christ and his religion, Christ already has won our hearts. And if indeed Christ has our hearts, it will not be long before he has our lives as well. We Christians of the twentieth century need to strike out along this line—to appeal to all high-minded men, to all men in whom the moral is primary and controlling, to join with us in the one and only program that promises to make men moral and to save society from chaos, the Program of Jesus. If

such men are not as yet able to go all the way with us, let us invite them to go just as far as they can go. Indeed, this is exactly the kind of invitation that Jesus gives. "Come unto me. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me." When this is done, we may be sure that the time will not be far distant when they "shall find rest unto their souls."

I have a deep and deepening conviction that we have for too long erred in putting stress primarily on the metaphysical rather than on the ethical. I do not mean to discount theology. The man who does so usually has a shallow theology of his own. I believe in philosophy. If the great thinkers of the early Church such as Saint Paul and Athanasius had not gone down to the bottom of things and given a reasoned and reasonable account of the faith that was in them, Christianity would long ago have perished out of the world. And if great theologians in our own time are not able to "out-think" the doubters of this age, Christianity will not long endure. But always it has been the actual transforming and redeeming work of Christ in human lives and in

human institutions that has presented the unanswerable and victorious argument for the divineness of our religion.

One remembers how that prophet of righteousness, Sam P. Jones, used to say that the hardest things in the Bible for him to believe were the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount. Moreover, it seems to have been overlooked that the great leader in the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century, John Wesley himself, put emphasis just here. That is a very interesting letter he once wrote:

> "I find more profit in sermons on either good tempers or good works than in what are vulgarly called gospel sermons. That term has now become a mere cant word: I wish none of our society would use it. It has no determinate meaning. Let but a pert, self-sufficient animal that has neither sense nor grace, bawl out something about Christ, his blood, or justification by faith, and his hearers cry out, 'What a fine gospel sermon!' Surely the Methodists have not so learned Christ! We know no gospel without salvation from sin."

Wherever the followers of Jesus are true to their Master, they will let it be known that the salvation Christ offers is always a salvation from sin. That to deliver men from moral evil is the grand objective of Christianity, needs more and more to be put in the forefront of all our Christian teaching. And more and more do we need to stress the fact that it is precisely this that Christianity does. If this has not been done, if professed Christians have not lived like Jesus, the fault does not lie in essential Christianity, but in men who tend continually to slip down from the high ideals of the gospel and to lay stress on a creed to be accepted rather than on a life in Christ to be lived.

But Christianity is still able to demonstrate its divine origin by its works of righteousness. And it would perhaps not be going too far to say that from the days when Christ was first preached in Jerusalem, Antioch, and Corinth down to the present hour, there has not been a town anywhere in the world where the gospel has gone, in which there could not be found

noble men and saintly women so much like the Master that one would know them to be Christians without having to wait for another to tell it of them.

After making a careful study of the vast literature dealing with the lives of the "saints," William James declares that "the best fruits of religious experience are the best things that history has to show," and that reading the story of their lives "is to feel encouraged and uplifted and washed in better moral air." [2]

And we go further than James. Christianity demonstrates its power, not only in the unusual and remarkable, but in the usual and the ordinary. The credentials of Christ are seen, not alone in his power to lift men to heights beyond the reach of the average man, but in his ability to keep the average man steady under trial and calm in the midst of difficulties; that is to say, to produce men and women fitted to do the ordinary work of life. And here, at last, does the supreme test come: Does Christianity enable ordinary people to meet the

[2] "The Varieties of Religious Experience," p. 259.

ordinary duties of life in the spirit of Jesus? We answer that it does. And what a blessed and beautiful company that is—the company of the true saints—sweet and gentle souls of all centuries—heroic and self-sacrificing men and women who have gladly borne life's daily burdens and have patiently discharged their common duties! Here is the final evidence and supreme demonstration of Christianity—in gentle and sweet mothers, who "patient bear their cross below," and remind one of Jesus, and in unpretentious but courageous fathers who teach their children that "religion is the chief concern of mortals here below"—in followers of Christ in all walks of life who keep the Christian faith shining brightly in the world and present an argument in its defence which no man can set aside.

And we may go still further and throw down Lowell's challenge. We ask the critics of Christianity "to find a spot ten miles square on this planet where a decent man may live in decency and comfort and security, supporting and educating his children unspoiled and unpolluted—a place where age is reverenced, infancy respected, womanhood honoured and

human life held in due regard . . . where the gospel has not gone and cleared the way."

One other thing ought to be said in this connection. Even though Christians should fail, Christianity stands offering the noblest ideals and pointing to the loftiest life. That Christianity, as a matter of fact, does tower far above the best things seen in the lives of Christians is no argument against the practicability of our religion. It is rather a kind of evidence in its favour. "When the King of the Tartars, who was become Christian," says Montaigne, "desired to come to Lyons to kiss the Pope's feet, and there to be an eyewitness of the sanctity he hoped to find in our manners, immediately our good S. Louis sought to divert him from his purpose: for fear lest our inordinate way of living should, on the contrary, put him out of conceit with so holy a belief. And yet it happened quite otherwise to this other, who, going to Rome to the same end, and there seeing the dissolution of the Prelates and the people of that time, settled himself so much the more firmly in our religion, considering how great the force and dignity of it must necessarily be that could

maintain its dignity and splendour amongst so much corruption and in so vicious hands." This story is given in "Modern Substitutes for Christianity" by Muir, who immediately goes on to say: "The woes of the world are to be cured by more Christianity, not by less; and on us, in whose hands have been placed its holy oracles, rests the responsibility of proving its inestimable advantage ourselves and of conferring it on all mankind."

II

The central position taken in this lecture is that in the Program of Jesus with reference to individuals and to society at large, we find the best defence of the Christian religion.

Horace Bushnell in Chapter XII of his well-known book, "Nature and the Supernatural," speaks of the "watermarks in the Christian religion." He tells an interesting story. Suit upon a note of hand had long been pending in a certain court, payment of which was resisted on the ground that no such note had ever been given and that the note was a forgery. Counsel for the defence had almost despaired of

making out his case, when it so happened that in his closing plea, having the note in his hand, he brought it directly between himself and the light. At once his eye caught sight of a mark in the paper. He stopped and examined it carefully, and there was the watermark of a paper company that had gone into business at a later time than the date the note bore. That was all the evidence he needed. The plaintiff was turned into a felon and consigned to a felon's punishment. Bushnell's argument is that *in the doctrines of Christianity themselves may be seen the divine watermark.* With notable ability and large success he passes under review the great theological doctrines of Christianity and shows their divine origin. He quotes a saying of Napoleon's, "One thing follows another like the ranks of a celestial army."

It is exactly this kind of argument that I have in mind with reference to the practical aspects of our holy religion. One might find reason to question some of Bushnell's conclusions and to say that possibly some of the things he views with admiration are the products of great and learned minds illuminated by the Spirit of God, rather than a simple reading

of that divine watermark which does shine out so clearly in the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the argument is a sound one. And of this we are perfectly sure, that when one turns to the Four Gospels and then goes on to a study of the apostolic interpretation of the practical principles of Christianity, no man can question that the divine watermark is here in the New Testament. *The Teachings of Jesus are here; his Holy Life is here; the Gospel of the Kingdom is here. And if these do not furnish a solution to the problems of personal life and life in relation to our fellow men, then there is no solution.*

And I go further. When the attorney held the note between his eyes and the light, there was the watermark. Having eyes, he saw it. He could not keep from seeing it unless he had shut his eyes. My point is this—the Program of Jesus shines in its own light. Hold it up, and men will see it. And it would be better before talking to men about things concerning which there is room for disagreement, to begin where all men must agree. In a most wonderful way the teachings of Jesus make their

direct and immediate appeal to the heart. We do not need to argue about them; we need only to hold them up where they can be seen. Something of this sort Saint Paul must have had in mind when he declared that the apostolic method was *"by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."* Not by *arguing* about the truth; not by *defending* the truth; but by *"the manifestation of the truth."* Just by holding aloft the great truth of the gospel and letting it shine out into the darkness. Light was made for the eye and the eye for the light.

> "The truth in God's breast
> Lies trace for trace upon ours impressed:
> Though he is so bright and we are so dim,
> We are made in his image to witness him:
> And were there no eye in us to tell,
> Instructed by no inner sense,
> The light of heaven from the dark of hell,
> That light would want its evidence."

But there *is* in us the power to know the truth when we see it, and when the truths of Christianity are presented in their simplicity they need no further argument.

Let us glance swiftly at some of these things.

1. *Take Christ's ideal for the individual life.*

Love to God and love to one's brother—that may sum it up in a word. Where God is loved supremely, all that is contrary to God drops out of one's life. When man is loved as a brother, there can be no hatred for any man and no contempt for any. And more than that, there will be glad and willing service. Thus Jesus teaches. Every man can see that this is the true Way of Life.

2. *Take the Christian ideal for the home.*

So long as life shall last, husband and wife must live together in faithful wedlock. Marriage is sacred. One should no more think of getting rid of one wife and getting another than of getting rid of one sister and getting another. Certainly this is in harmony with the teachings of Jesus. That this has seemed to human nature to be hard; that some men have been unwilling to endure it—or rather to live up to it—everybody knows. But the very existence of civilisation is based on monogamous marriage. And our modern pagan notions of the marriage relation must be re-

nounced and displaced by the principles of Christ, or society will not long endure.

3. *Consider also the Christian ideal for society.*

"We are members one of another." We do not live in isolation from our fellow men. We are all bound up in one bundle of life. The success of one ought to be the success of all; and the failure of one is the failure of all. Long ago Confucius stated the "golden rule" in its negative form—men should not do to others what they would not have others do to them. But Jesus states it positively—we must do to others what we would have them do to us. We must dare to apply the "golden rule" to business and to all social conditions, or we are not yet fully Christian. And does not this ideal make an immediate appeal to the best that is in us? Does it not justify itself in the presence of the enlightened conscience? So do all the teachings of Jesus make their own direct appeal. The divine "water mark" is there. They shine in their own light.

4. *And take what has been said about interracial and international relations.*

Is there any other way out of the tragic sit-

uation in which we have found ourselves? Can white and brown and yellow and black people live in the same world on any other than Christian principles? Can we not see that the misunderstanding and suspicion and hatred that are general to-day between the various races of the world must all be traced back to a failure to apply the teachings of the Master to our daily conduct towards men of another colour and another race? And if the principles of Christ had not themselves convinced us that the same law of love that is to obtain between individual Christians must be made to operate between nations also, surely the utter failure of everything else that mankind has tried should now make us willing to come back to Jesus and attempt to put his teachings into practice.

I do declare that the time has come and the hour has struck when as never before the people of the world are coming to see that the one solution of interracial troubles and international misunderstandings is to be found in the application of the ethics of Jesus Christ to all such troubles and misunderstandings. The tragic situation which the Church faces

to-day calls for men and women who are willing to lead in a mighty movement to make the whole world Christian.

I would not be understood as taking the position that there is no difference of opinion as to the applicability of the teachings of the Master to the solution of social, economic, interracial, and international problems. *But I do take the position that the teachings of Jesus make a direct and immediate appeal to all who are interested supremely in moral and spiritual things. To all men of goodwill they speak with an authority which cannot be questioned.* And what I am insisting on is that they do not need to be defended; they only need to be stated and applied. If we will only give them a chance they will make themselves heard and will win their own way. They do not need to be argued for any more than one needs to argue for a sunrise. They are a sunrise. Look! The sun is up! Out of darkness the world moves into the light! It is daybreak everywhere! The teachings of Jesus no more need to be argued for than one needs to argue that a bouquet of "American Beauty" roses is beautiful. They are beautiful, if they are beautiful to you. If

you do not think them beautiful, it is your own fault and not the fault of the flowers. The teachings of Jesus no more need to be argued for than one needs to argue that Handel's *Messiah* is wonderful. If you are able to appreciate music, you have some of the finest things in life in store for you. If you do not appreciate music, music will go on just the same without you. It is told of Dean Stanley that so little appreciation of music did he have that once while Jenny Lind was singing, the Dean arose and left the room. It simply did not mean anything to him. And just so with the teachings of him who spoke as never man spoke. It must be confessed that there are some men who see nothing in them and that there are others who have for them a positive antipathy—they hate them. But exactly as art and music go on in spite of certain unfortunate persons who are deficient in their mental and æsthetic make-up, so do the teachings of the world's Redeemer go on appealing to people who are in sympathy with the True and the Beautiful and the Good. The human heart is human the world over. Human needs are the same everywhere. Christ and his gospel meet

a world-wide need and call out a universal response.

Let it be emphasised that Christianity is not a problem. Teachers and preachers have raised too many questions. We have talked too much about the problems of religion, such as the problem of Genesis and Geology, the problem of the Hexateuch, the Synoptic problem, and I know not how many others. It is here and now affirmed that the gospel of Jesus Christ is not a problem, but the solution of all problems. And has it not occurred to us that most of these questions over which certain good people are so greatly exercised nowadays have nothing at all to do with the teachings of Jesus and very little to do with the vital questions of actual life? There are, indeed, problems connected with religion. The ultimate questions of life call for the exercise of the highest powers of the human intellect. Saint Paul, for instance, presents us with many difficulties. It will be remembered that the Apostle Peter himself found in Paul's writings "some things hard to be understood." But touching the meaning of what Jesus said there seems to be pretty general agreement everywhere.

This, then, is what I mean when I say that the Program of Jesus is the best Christian Apologetic. Like great music and great art, it speaks a universal language.

III

In speaking of the Program of Jesus as being the best Christian apologetic, I have this also in mind: By doing the will of God in harmony with the teachings of Jesus we come to the attainment of Christian certitude.

I have already referred to the judgment of another that *the prevailing attitude of the modern man to Christianity is that of intellectual confusion but of moral sympathy.* What I am insisting on is that the way to clear up the intellectual confusion is by making an appeal to the moral sympathy. For it should be understood once for all that in religion "the primacy belongs to the *conative* and not the *cognitive* in man." *What a man wills to do, will influence and control the entire intellectual life of that man.*

Let me tell a story of George Eliot as given by F. W. H. Myers.

"I remember how at Cambridge, I walked with her once in the Fellows' Garden of Trinity on an evening of rainy May: and she, stirred somewhat beyond her wont, and taking as her text the three words which have been used so often as the inspiring trumpet call of men—the words, *God, Immortality, Duty*—pronounced with terrible earnestness, how inconceivable was the first, how unbelievable the second, and how peremptory and absolute the third. Never, perhaps, have sterner accents affirmed the sovereignty of impersonal and uncompromising Law. I listened and night fell: her grave, majestic countenance turned toward me like a sibyl's in the gloom, and it was as though she withdrew from my grasp one by one the two scrolls of promise, and left me the third scroll, awful with inevitable fates. And when we stood at length and parted, amid the columnar circuit of the forest trees, beneath the last twilight of starless skies, I seemed to be gazing, like Titus at Jerusalem, on vacant seats and empty halls, on a sanctuary with no Presence to hallow it, and heaven left lonely of a God."

This is precisely what we are brought to when we attempt to think of *Duty* apart from *God* and *Immortality*. And it is a strange type of mind that can imagine that such a thing as *Duty* can exist in a Universe that knows no *God*. *God, Immortality, Duty*—these are the three greatest words in the vocabulary of man. It is true that men have sometimes lost the consciousness of God out of their lives and have lost their faith in Immortality. But somehow the sense of Duty strangely persists. We cannot get away from it. It sounds always in the soul. And Duty is what Wordsworth calls it, the "stern daughter of the voice of God." In the feeling of moral obligation God speaks to us and will not permit us to be deaf to his voice. For if we *must do* a certain thing and *must refrain* from doing something else, then it follows that we *may do* that thing and *may keep from doing* this other. And if this be true, then we are not held fast in a material universe and bound forever by cause and effect. This is to say that *Duty affirms the spiritual universe*. And when once we have affirmed the spiritual universe, it will not be long—if we are intellectually and mor-

ally consistent—when we shall go on to affirm *God*.

I may be permitted to give a noble passage from David S. Cairns:

> "Duty is the rock in the maelstrom where we can take our stand. Many a man, who in these bewildering and testing days has given up every form of faith, stands fast in this recognition of the immutable difference between right and wrong. The great house of Faith in which his fathers worshipped may be down, the wild, elemental forces of storm and earthquake may have shattered it, the winds may be sweeping through the ruins, the wild grass growing where the altar stood. But if that one shrine stands, and if he can keep the light burning there, then I believe that either in this life or in some life which is to come, the whole of that ancient faith will come back again in nobler forms than before. If you will persist in staking your life on that conviction, the logic of the years will overbear the logic of the hours, and bring you back at last to

faith in God, and, I believe, to faith in God in Christ." [3]

Jesus said to unbelieving and questioning men: "If any man willeth to do God's will he shall know of the teaching, whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself." Obedience has been called "the organ of spiritual knowledge." For too long it has been taken for granted that the intellect is all there is to a man; and that in the solution of the ultimate problems of life the intellect alone is sufficient. It needs to be understood that the intellect is only one aspect of the total personality. Man is *conscience* and *heart* and *will,* as well as *intellect.* And for the proper approach to the problems of life one must come with one's total personality. Here is the truth in pragmatism that is really worth while. Conscience, heart, and will have more to do with the moral life than has the mere intellect. Life is much bigger than logic. Duty affirms the Spiritual Universe, and spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The heart has its reasons no less

[3] "The Reasonableness of the Christian Faith," pp. 57-58.

than the head. The conscience somehow becomes aware of an Awful Voice speaking in the soul. The movement of the will in the direction of righteousness puts one in touch with invisible realities. Socrates enunciated a principle which has long held sway over the minds of men, but a principle which is not sound. He said: *"Know and you will do."* Jesus completely reversed Socrates with his great doctrine: *Do and you shall know.* The will to do carries the total personality along with it, puts one in sympathy with moral reality, proclaims one's kinship with the spiritual and eternal, and leads ultimately to joyous spiritual certitude.

This leads to the conclusion that "faith" in the realm of religion is very similar to "faith" in the realm of science. The great discoveries of the scientists, their great hypotheses, are just great ventures of faith which land them in assurance that they have come upon ultimate truth. The scientist broods long over his problem; he makes innumerable experiments; he checks up again and again; after a time, by some unaccountable intuition, a solution dawns upon him. Sometimes he hardly knows whence

it came. He tests his conclusions, and his hypothesis works. In his discovery, he finds a strange intellectual joy. Presently he is sure that he is right, and if he be a devout soul, like the astronomer Kepler, he exclaims, "O God, I think thy thoughts after thee!"

Now something like this is the faith of the Christian. If one looks at it from the human standpoint only, one may say that God is the greatest discovery of the mind of man. In all ages and everywhere men have believed in God. Does a man have his doubts? Then let him venture out on the hypothesis of the being of God. Let him try it out in life. When he does this, he always finds that it works. The man who lives as if God were the Supreme Reality, comes inevitably to know that God is. When he does the will of God, he comes to know God.

Exactly the same thing is true with reference to the Christian doctrine of Immortality. With the Christian, Eternal Life is something other and better than mere length of years without ending. Eternal Life is *quality of life,* something that can be entered upon and realised here and now, in this present world. It is

not to be wondered at that some people know nothing about it and even go so far as to deny it. If one lives wholly in the realm of the senses, it is certain that one will have no realisation of spiritual things. If one lives wholly in the realm of the intellect, that is to say, if one thinks that the intellect alone can comprehend and understand the universe, it is certain that many of the finest things in life will escape him. Music and art, to mention nothing more, are entirely beyond the world of the mere intellect. But if one has the deep and abiding conviction that the spiritual is the real, that the ethical and religious world is of vastly more significance than the world of things and sensations—if one begins to see that the best things in human history have come out of belief and trust in the abiding reality of the spiritual—if one goes on to feel that without the continuing existence of the human soul in which shall forever be treasured up the spiritual gains of the human race, life has no meaning and existence, no worth-while goal—and if feeling all this, one adventures his whole life out upon the reality and permanence of the spiritual, then a glad and glorious experience

becomes his, *he puts Immortality to the test and verifies it.* When a man lives like an immortal, he knows that he is immortal.

And what shall we say of Christ? It is a simple recital of fact, and witnesses could be found all over the world to bear testimony to it, that all who have come to Jesus and lived in harmony with his teaching, have attained to Christian certainty. If one is interested in moral and spiritual things, if one is tremendously concerned to know the truth about Jesus, let him make the experiment. He can find out no other way. He can always find out this way. By doing, he shall know.

Nothing is more needed than that with the confidence of assured conviction men should address themselves to the great business of carrying out the Program of Jesus. And if they would have this calm confidence, let them throw themselves into the main stream of the work of the world as it has to do with the salvation of human society; let them interest themselves, even as Jesus did, in personal service where sin and suffering and sorrow are found. Where sin is, there would Jesus have us go. Where suffering is, there would the

Master send us with the healing ministries of the gospel. Where sorrow is, there would Christ go with us and bind up the broken-hearted and proclaim liberty to the captives.

This has never been more beautifully illustrated than in Edward A. Steiner's autobiographical sketch entitled, "The Miracle," published in *The Christian Century* of December the 4th, 1924. It was communion day in the church of which he was the pastor. He had looked forward to that Sunday. He had prayed fervently that Christ might be felt among his people in sacrificial power when the bread was broken and the wine poured out. But he was disappointed. Everything went wrong that morning, and he went home crushed and defeated, unable to be the cheerful companion that a husband and father should be at the dinner table. And then the night service came on. And it was even worse. For he had advertised a somewhat sensational subject and the house was crowded and people turned away. His message was consciously superficial. But the crowd was pleased and the Church officials showered congratulations upon him. Then out into the night the preacher went

for a long walk with no particular end in view. He found himself at length in front of a saloon, and some impulse urged him to enter and see what he could do there with his gospel. He could hardly account for his presence there. But I shall let him tell the rest of the story:

"I was making for the door when a man stumbled against me and said in a commanding voice in feverish haste, 'Give me a dime for a drink of whiskey!' The man's face twitched, his arms moved restlessly back and forth and, with an oath, he said again, 'Give me a dime for a drink. Can't you see that I must have whiskey?'

"I had been 'panhandled' often, a soft mark for all those who asked for money for a warm meal or a bed, and I never felt shocked when I saw them spending money for drink. I knew full well how easy it is to lie when one craves a stimulant. This was so frank, so honest a request that I dived into my pocket for the dime, but as I gave it to him, I said: 'In five minutes you will want another drink, and then another, won't you?'

" 'You are d——d right!' he answered.

'That's all I want and all I have been wanting for many a day.'

"With great tenderness, I put my arm around him and said: 'You need something better than whiskey. You are a sick man. You need a doctor. Come, let us find one.'

"If the man struggled with his desire for a drink I did not notice it. He followed me like a homeless, hungry dog who has found a new master.

"It was not easy to find a doctor on Sunday night. The offices were closed, but finally I located one of rather unsavoury reputation, a quack or something worse, though he had a diploma.

" 'What is the matter with this man?' I asked. 'Can you tell?'

" 'That man has the tremens. He'll see snakes in a minute. Where did you pick up such a whiskey barrel?'

" 'What does he need now?' I ignored his cheap question.

" 'He needs bromo.'

" 'Then give it to him, all he can hold.' He pumped the trembling man full of bromo.

" 'How much?' I asked. He named his price, and I paid it.

" 'What shall I do with him next?'

" 'Give him food, and then put him to bed.'

"Down the narrow, dark, rickety stairs we went, the man leaning more and more heavily upon me. I took him to an all-night restaurant, and ordered a cup of hot coffee. The steaming, coffee-like brew was poured into a huge, heavy, unwieldy cup.

"The sick man lifted it to his lips, but his trembling fingers failed to hold it, and it came crashing to the floor.

"The waiter swore mildly. I asked him to fill another cup, and I held it to the lips of the man while he drank it . . . and the miracle was performed!

"I saw Jesus of Nazareth. I heard him say: 'This is the blood of the new covenant, shed for the remission of sins' . . . and when I broke bread and, after dipping it into the coffee, pressed it through the man's lips, now trembling violently from a chill, . . . again I heard the voice of Jesus: 'This is my body, broken for you.'

"When I bedded the man for his sleep, I heard that same voice say, 'Inasmuch as ye did it to the least of these ye did it unto me.'

"On that particular Sunday night, I knew that I had served at the Lord's supper. My wife, my children, and my congregation knew it, for I carried the presence of God with me through the week."

The conclusion I have been driving toward is in the last sentence: This preacher knew and his wife and children and his congregation knew that he had come into actual touch with the Living Christ, for he carried the presence of God with him through the week.

The best and surest way to convince the world of the divineness of our religion is to believe in it ourselves sufficiently to dare to live it. The principles of Jesus when put into practice will bring the world to Christ. The work Christ continues to do among men bears perpetual testimony that he came from God. Moreover, if any man has fallen into doubt touching the truth of the Christian religion, let him follow the example of Jesus, let him go out and become a brother and helper and

servant of such as sin and suffer and die, and a great light will kindle up in his own soul.

Henceforth he may doubt some things, but forever he will be sure of *God* and *Immortality* and *Christ*.

THE END

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